



2026

Metro North Health and Metro South Health proudly present the

ALLIED HEALTH RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM

Symposium Handbook

A collaborative event showcasing excellence in allied health-led research, innovation, translation, and service improvement.

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Welcome

On behalf of the Organising Committee, Metro North Chief Allied Health Practitioner, and Metro South Executive Director of Allied Health, it is our great pleasure to welcome you to the **2026 Allied Health Research Symposium – THRIVE: Transforming Healthcare through Research, Innovation and Excellence**.

We are delighted to join colleagues from across Queensland for this inspiring event, held at the Royal Brisbane and Women’s Hospital Education Centre on Tuesday, 17 February 2026.

Metro North Health and Metro South Health are the two largest health services in Queensland, and together we benefit from the invaluable contributions of a diverse, multi-skilled, and future-focused allied health workforce. THRIVE 2026 brings together this collective expertise and dedication, showcasing our shared commitment to advancing evidence-based, high-quality, and innovative care across the state and nation.

This year’s program highlights exceptional research, innovation, and service improvement initiatives that reflect the breadth and impact of allied health contributions across Metro North Health, Metro South Health, Queensland Health, and our university partners.

Across a dynamic program—including a keynote address, oral and lightning presentations, poster sessions, panel discussions, and networking opportunities—we invite you to engage deeply with the ideas and innovations shaping the future of healthcare. We are especially excited to feature sessions exploring artificial intelligence and digital technology, consumer engagement and co-design, and emerging models of care, led by distinguished speakers, panellists, clinicians, and researchers.

THRIVE continues to grow each year, strengthening collaboration across our services. We extend our sincere gratitude to our sponsors, whose support enables us to host an event of this scale and quality. Most importantly, we thank every member of our allied health and healthcare community for your dedication to improving care and advancing research, innovation, and practice.

We hope you find today’s program enriching, thought-provoking, and energising. May THRIVE 2026 inspire new connections, ideas, and opportunities to transform healthcare together.

Warm regards,

Theodora Osei-Amo

Acting Workforce Development Officer, Office of the Chief Allied Health Practitioner, Metro North Allied Health

Organising Committee Chair, 2026 Allied Health Research Symposium (THRIVE)

Dr Greg Kyle

Research Workforce Development Officer, Centre for Functioning and Health Research, Metro South Allied Health

Organising Committee Secretariat, 2026 Allied Health Research Symposium (THRIVE)

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Program



8:00 – 8:30am	Registration Desk Open		Foyer
8:30 – 8:45am	Welcome and Official Opening <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Kellie Stockton – Executive Director Allied Health, Metro South Health • Perry Judd – Acting Chief Allied Health Practitioner, Metro North Health 		Auditorium
8:45 – 8:55am	Welcome to Country <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refiti Tovi – Welcome to Country on behalf of the Turrbal People of Brisbane 		
8:55 – 9:00am	Platinum Sponsor Presentation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Karen Moritz – Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Health, Medicine and Behavioural Sciences, The University of Queensland 		Auditorium
9:00 – 9:30am	Keynote Address Topic: Artificial Intelligence & Digital Technology Applications in Allied Health Speaker: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr David Ireland – Senior Research Scientist, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation 		
9:30 – 10:00am	Panel Discussion Topic: Artificial Intelligence & Digital Technology Applications in Allied Health Panellists: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjunct Associate Professor Katrina Campbell – Director, Create Health Advisory • Dr David Ireland – Senior Research Scientist, Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation • Dr Jodie Austin – Director Clinical Informatics, Queensland Digital Health Centre, The University of Queensland • Professor Michael Barras – Director of Pharmacy, Princess Alexandra Hospital & Conjoint Professor, School of Pharmacy, The University of Queensland • Dr Emmah Doig – Occupational Therapy Conjoint Senior Research Fellow, STARS Education and Research Alliance & School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, The University of Queensland and Metro North Health 		
10:00 – 10:30am	Morning Tea Break and Poster Viewing		
10:30 – 11:30pm	Oral Presentations 1 Auditorium TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION Chair: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Pip Logan – Co-Director, STARS Education and Research Alliance & Professor of Occupational Therapy, School of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences, The University of Queensland 	Oral Presentations 1 Seminar Room CONSUMER EXPERIENCES & VOICES Chair: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Professor Michael Barras – Director of Pharmacy, Princess Alexandra Hospital & Conjoint Professor, School of Pharmacy, The University of Queensland 	Auditorium / Seminar Room
10:30 – 10:40am	Co-design of virtual reality-based simulations with people with brain injury, clinicians and technology developers for use in inpatient rehabilitation Emmah Doig	Insights into the experiences of people living with chronic kidney disease and obesity participating in a randomized controlled weight loss trial: A qualitative study Marguerite Conley	

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10:40 – 10:50am	RITA: Rehabilitation Innovation and Technology Assessment service Jacqui Donovan	What do patients prefer? Using a Best-Worst Scaling Survey to Investigate the Relative Importance of Attributes Associated with Public Hospital Outpatient Appointments Amy Brown	Auditorium / Seminar Room
10:50 – 11:00am	Feasibility of implementing TeleCHAT components with Metro North Health clinical rehabilitation services Jade Dignam	Investigating how social connection influences hearing aid uptake for adults with acquired hearing loss Dianna Vidas	
11:00 – 11:10am	Virtual Reality as an adjunct to Vestibular Rehabilitation Therapy in Persistent Postural Perceptual Dizziness: A pilot study Dharsha Petrie	Experiences of current practice, priorities and strategies for enabling meaningful consumer and community involvement in health and medical research Lisa Anemaat	
11:10 – 11:20am	Quality and telehealth-delivered allied health care: A consumer perspective Renee Cook	Beyond the Scale: Perspectives on Comprehensive Obesity Management in a Tertiary Multidisciplinary Service Caitlin Merz	
11:20 – 11:30am	ULTRA Late-RAD: Feasibility of Ultrasound Imaging to Characterise Late Radiation Treatment Effects in Head and Neck Cancer Survivors Laurelie Wishart	Co-designing a tailored program for managing substance use in acquired brain injury Matthew Gullo	
11:30am – 12:10pm	Lightning Oral Presentations 1 Auditorium	Lightning Oral Presentations 1 Seminar Room	Auditorium / Seminar Room
11:30 – 11:33am	Cognitive rehabilitation using immersive and non-immersive virtual reality as interventions after traumatic brain injury: A scoping review Sarah Prescott	Towards Inclusive Healthcare: Lived Experiences and Co-Designed Recommendations from Autistic and Neurodivergent People Caitlin Taggart	
11:33 – 11:36am	Speak Clearly Together: A novel online treatment for dysarthria in Huntington's Disease Shana Taubert	Co-designing communication accessible infection control training for consumers partnering with health services Lisa Anemaat	
11:36 – 11:39am	Oesophageal screening in videofluoroscopic swallow studies: a five-year evaluation of clinical and operational impacts following the introduction and refinement of a protocol and clinical pathway Kellie McCarthy	Person Centred Compassionate Care in Hospital: What Matters to Patients? Ruth Cox	



11:39 – 11:42am	Downgraded medication incidents – Untapped learnings for patient safety? Arna Lancashire	Connection and Kinship: Culturally Safe and Responsive Care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children and Families Sara Winter	Auditorium / Seminar Room
11:42 – 11:50am	Q&A / Room Break	Q&A / Room Break	
11:50 – 11:53am	Nutrition and swallowing outcomes following transoral robotic surgery (TORS) +/- adjuvant treatment for head and neck cancer Teresa Brown	How low can you go? Reducing plantar pressure in the diabetic foot Megan Hurford	
11:53 – 11:56am	Technology-enhanced, group-based (TEG) model of hand therapy management versus usual care following carpal tunnel release surgery: a feasibility and pilot randomised controlled trial Emma Taylor	A scoping review exploring father involvement in supporting children with communication difficulties Felipe Retamal-Walter	
11:56 – 11:59am	ECHO®- driven facilitation to advance the uptake of telehealth video consultations in allied health outpatient services across Metro South Health Renee Cook	Building Capability for Person-Centred Rehabilitation: Perspectives from Healthcare Teams and Leaders Karina O’Leary	
11:59am – 12:02pm	The journey to implementing SMART for improvement of metabolic health in people with schizophrenia Urska Arnautovska	Dysphagia presentation and management within a tertiary adult forensic mental health setting: A convergent parallel mixed methods study Katrina Dunn	
12:02 – 12:07pm	Q&A	Q&A	
12:10 – 1:00pm	Lunch Break and Poster Viewing		Foyer
1:00 – 2:00pm	Oral Presentations 2 Auditorium IMPROVING CARE, SYSTEMS & SERVICES Chair: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mark Cruickshank – Executive Director Allied Health, The Royal Brisbane & Women’s Hospital 	Oral Presentations 2 Seminar Room WORKFORCE & CAPABILITY BUILDING Chair: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dr Ra’eesa Doola – Team Leader, Nutrition & Dietetics, Princess Alexandra Hospital; Honorary Senior Lecturer, The University of Queensland 	Auditorium / Seminar Room
1:00 – 1:10pm	Evaluating and translating pharmaceutical care bundle delivery Martin Canning	Building Connections: An Evaluation of a Peer Support Program for Newly Graduated Dietitians Chloe Jones	

CONTINUED >

1:10 – 1:20pm	Optimising Medication Safety for Inter-Hospital Transfers Lisa Sorbello	The structure, function and capabilities of Allied Health research roles in Queensland Health: A survey Caitlin Brandenburg	Auditorium / Seminar Room
1:20 – 1:30pm	'Peace of mind for everybody': Exploring referrer's perspectives on the impact and fidelity of a multidisciplinary hospital avoidance and post-acute community service in Metro South Health Mereki Collins	Lessons learnt—a systematic review of the development, delivery and impact of interventions to improve interprofessional collaborative practice for hospital teams Karina O'Leary	
1:30 – 1:40pm	Incorporating creative arts therapies in community child and youth mental health services to improve satisfaction and engagement with treatment: A mixed-methods feasibility study Kate Aitchison	Asking the Questions - Exploring the Experiences of Menopause at Caboolture Hospital, Kilcoy Hospital and Woodford Corrections Health Directorate Helen Edwards	
1:40 – 1:50pm	Use of sensory processing information in the diagnosis of neurodiversity in children at an Australian community hospital Annabelle Marozza	Turning potential into practice: developing Allied Health research capability at Bayside Kirsten Strudwick	
1:50 – 2:00pm	Interventions for smoking cessation in inpatient psychiatry settings – systematic literature review Sally Plever	Evaluating the use of the SNAP case mix classification system at Redland Hospital Fiona Garrett	
2:00 – 2:40pm	Lightning Oral Presentations 2 Auditorium	Lightning Oral Presentations 2 Seminar Room	Auditorium / Seminar Room
2:00 – 2:03pm	Measuring what matters: quality indicators for hospital nutrition and food services Adrienne Young & Anja Christoffersen	Evaluation of patient outcomes from an interprofessional student-led diabetes program Joanne Avery	
2:03 – 2:06pm	Implementing Reinforcing Informed Medication prescription for low back pain in the Emergency department: outcomes of the RIME controlled interrupted time-series study Panagiotis Barlas	Scaling SIPS to Bayside: Enhancing allied health student development by expanding a Student Interprofessional Peer Supervision (SIPS) model Kiara Rodrigues	
2:06 – 2:09pm	Exploring the 'active ingredients' of clinical interventions targeting physical activity behaviours after stroke – a systematic review Niru Mahendran	Implementation of an interprofessional speech pathology & dietetics clinical assistant model of care for therapeutic mealtime tasks Lauren Wright	
2:09 – 2:12pm	Aerobic exercise positively effects brain derived neurotrophic factor in sub-acute stroke: an RCT Christopher Mackay	Impact of Ceiling Suspended Shield Size on Primary Operator Radiation Dose During Coronary Angiography and Intervention Jim Crowhurst	
2:12 – 2:20pm	Q&A / Room Break	Q&A / Room Break	



2:20 – 2:23pm	Total hip replacement outcomes following the implementation of a minimalistic post-op guideline Zoe Otto	The efficacy and safety of a preoperative dietitian-led very low calorie diet clinic for adults with obesity for colorectal cancer surgery: a retrospective cohort study Rainbow Lai	Auditorium / Seminar Room
2:23 – 2:26pm	From surgery to support: Enhancing multidisciplinary care pathways in skull base surgery Joanne Hiatt	Direct to Psychology and Stepped Care in the Multidisciplinary Sleep Service Sara Winter	
2:26 – 2:29pm	From Weight Loss to Waitlist: Evaluating the Impact of the Tertiary Obesity Multidisciplinary Service Caitlin Merz	The effectiveness of Physiotherapy-led interventions for shoulder osteoarthritis: A systematic review Daha Muhammad	
2:29 – 2:32pm	Patterns in Paediatric Dental Emergency Department Presentations: A Metro South Health Perspective Leah Hobbs	Making Intravenous Iron Administration Safe(r) for Patients – Our 12-month Journey at QEII Jubilee Hospital Fang Mak	
2:32 – 2:40pm	Q&A	Q&A	
2:40 – 3:15pm	Afternoon Tea and Poster Viewing		Foyer
3:15 – 4:00pm	<p>Panel Discussion</p> <p>Topic: Consumer Engagement & Co-Design in Research – Consumer and Clinician Researcher Experiences, Learnings, and Tips</p> <p>Panellists:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Nina Meloncelli – Director, HELIX Hub • Dr Kelsey Pateman – Principal Research Fellow, Allied Health, The Royal Brisbane & Women’s Hospital • Dr Ruth Cox – Director, Occupational Therapy, Queen Elizabeth II Jubilee Hospital • Dr Adrienne Young – Research Coordinator, Nutrition & Dietetics, The Royal Brisbane & Women’s Hospital & Senior Research Fellow, The University of Queensland • Anja Christofferson – Consumer Co-Researcher, Metro North Health & Adjunct Associate Fellow, The University of Queensland 		Auditorium
4:00 – 4:15pm	<p>Closing Remarks and Prizes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dr Kellie Stockton – Executive Director Allied Health, Metro South Health • Perry Judd – Acting Chief Allied Health Practitioner, Metro North Health 		Auditorium

Speakers and Presenters

Panel: Artificial Intelligence and Digital Technology Applications in Allied Health.

PANEL CHAIR

Dr Katrina Campbell

Katrina brings over two decades of experience across clinical, academic, executive and advisory roles. She has driven measurable impact across health systems, from international research leadership and nationally recognised capability building initiatives to statewide reform and health service wide programs. With deep expertise in implementation science, operational excellence, workforce development and digital innovation, Katrina has a proven track record of building high performing teams and designing sustainable models of care that deliver scalable change in complex environments



KEYNOTE AND PANELLIST

Dr David Ireland

Dr David Ireland is a Senior Research Scientist at the Australian E-Health Research Centre. Here he works with speech & occupational therapists and other clinicians in realising technology interventions that have gone on to win national awards in research & development. He received a Bachelor of Engineering in Microelectronics, Masters of Philosophy, and a Ph.D. in electronic engineering and computer science from Griffith University. Reportedly a “legend in chatbots for health” he has developed chatbot technology for applications in chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, smoking cessation, Parkinson’s disease, dementia and genomics. He is an associate editor for the journal of Artificial General Intelligence, where he contributes and edits on publications related to the philosophy of AI.



PANELLIST

Dr Jodie Austin

Dr Jodie Austin currently works as the Clinical Informatics Director for the SMART Hub, embedded within the Data Science Collaborative Research Platform and the Queensland Digital Health Centre at the University of Queensland. She also holds a conjoint research position with the Office of Chief Clinical Information Officer, eHealth Queensland. Jodie is a clinical pharmacist by background, having worked in both the public and private hospitals settings across Australia and the United Kingdom. Over the past decade her line of work transitioned into the field of clinical informatics. She completed her PhD in 2024, exploring the management of high-risk medications within digital hospital environments.



PANELLIST

Professor Michael Barras

Professor Michael Barras is the Director of Pharmacy at the Princess Alexandra Hospital and a Research conjoint with the School of Pharmacy (Hospital 0.8 FTE / UQ 0.2 FTE). He currently supervises 8 HDR students conducting research related to medication safety, health informatics and advanced scope clinical pharmacy. He has a strong interest in designing, testing and monitoring individualised dosing strategies for high-risk patients in the hospital setting. Michael has many significant research relationships in hospital, university, and industry settings.



PANELLIST

Dr Emmah Doig

Dr Emmah Doig is an occupational therapist and researcher specialising in brain injury rehabilitation. Emmah is a Senior Conjoint Research Fellow with the STARS Education and Research Alliance. Emmah has co designed and trialled interventions with consumers and clinicians in healthcare settings, including virtual reality technology, group rehabilitation programs, person centred goal setting approaches, and hand therapy and cancer related lymphoedema services. She co founded the national BRAINSPAN network and co developed the internationally recognised K TIPS. Her awards recognise research translation, consumer partnership, and HDR supervision.





Panel: Consumer Engagement and Co-Design - Consumer and Clinician Researcher Experiences, Learnings, and Tips.

PANEL CHAIR

Dr Nina Meloncelli

Dr Nina Meloncelli is an Accredited Practising Dietitian, clinician-researcher and Program Director of the HELIX Hub in Metro North's Healthcare Excellence and Innovation. She has extensive experience supporting healthcare staff to implement research evidence through education, training, coaching and mentoring. Her passion lies in removing obstacles to improving healthcare for clinicians and teams and the pragmatic application of tools, frameworks and methods to enable better implementation and innovation.



PANELLIST

Dr Kelsey Pateman

Kelsey is the Principal Research Fellow for Allied Health at the RBWH. Kelsey originally is an Oral Health Therapist and completed her PhD research in 2017. Kelsey champions consumer partnership in research and is a passionate advocate for co-design.



PANEL CHAIR

Dr Ruth Cox

Dr Ruth Cox is the Director Occupational Therapy at the QEII Hospital, in Metro South Health, Brisbane Australia. She is passionate about partnering with consumers in quality improvement and research so that all voices can influence healthcare. Her other research interests include models of care, skill mix, and co-design.



PANELLIST

Dr Adrienne Young

Dr Adrienne Young is an Advanced Accredited Practising Dietitian who currently holds positions as the Dietetics Research Coordinator at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital and a Senior Research Fellow at the University of Queensland's Centre for Health Services Research. Her research focuses on improving nutrition care in hospitals to prevent avoidable complications and optimise outcomes for older patients, with national and international recognition, including awards from Dietitians Australia and the International Congress of Dietetics received for this work. Adrienne is a leading advocate for consumer engagement and co-design, having co-led the development of the Metro North Co-design Framework. As an implementation scientist, she also co-developed the Allied Health Translating Research into Practice (AH-TRIP) initiative, aimed at embedding knowledge translation from research within the usual clinical care. She supervises clinicians undertaking their PhDs, research fellows and honours students, supporting the next generation of clinician researchers.



PANELLIST

Anja Christoffersen

Anja Christoffersen is a consumer co-researcher with lived experience of disability, working in disability advocacy and entrepreneurship. She holds an MBA in Health Services Management and Entrepreneurship, lectures in health services management (KBS) and health innovation co-design (QUT), and is an Adjunct Associate Fellow with The University of Queensland. She is also the founder of disability-owned ventures including the Women with Disabilities Entrepreneur Network (WDEN), Champion Health Agency, SHH!T Happens, and Against the Grain Coffee. Her research focuses on elevating consumer voices, improving career pathways for consumer researchers, and enhancing experiences for people with chronic illness and disability. She has contributed to state, national, and international projects and received multiple awards, including QLD Young Achiever of the Year, QLD Award for Excellence in Women's Leadership, and Women in Technology Consumer Strength Champion Award.



Scientific Posters

Presenter	Project Title
Amanda Hurley	A pilot study investigating whether tailored occupational therapy falls prevention education decreases a fear of falling for older persons who are admitted following an accidental fall
Nicole Turley	The use, benefits and challenges of scatter correction technology in digital x-ray imaging - a THRIVE Grant initiative.
Teresa Brown	Patient experience with nutrition and swallowing outcomes after skull base surgery for head and neck cancer
Amy Brown	Perceptions and Recall of Patients referred for Prostate Cancer Treatment
Shannon Dawson	Supporting people with hidden disabilities engagement with healthcare services
Kate Brennan	Belonging in Practice – What we Know About Health Professions Students’ Experiences in Practice Placements.
Dharsha Petrie	Feasibility of establishing routine physiotherapy assessment of peripheral vestibular dysfunction in adults with moderate-to-severe traumatic brain injury
Emma Sharkey	Bridging the gap between international guidelines and local practice: implementing evidence based occupational therapy practice with out-of-hospital cardiac arrest survivors at the Princess Alexandra Hospital
Sarah Prescott	Targeted programs to support family caregivers of adults with traumatic brain injury: A scoping review
Stephen West-Newman	Helpful placement strategies identified and utilised by physiotherapy students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds.
Amy Harch	Bridging technology and therapy: The use of Virtual Reality (VR) and E-Link in a student-led Occupational Therapy upper limb clinic
Mackenzie Rohde & Emily Hooper	Factors influencing burn outcomes in occupational performance of daily life post lithium-ion battery related injuries
Michael Wilson	The use of indirect calorimetry in patients with eating disorders. A scoping review.
Caitlin Brandenburg	Formation of the Queensland Health Allied Health Research Careers Development Framework
Belinda Dinga	From Concept to Culture: Innovation and Impact of a Dedicated Sensory Lead Role in Metro South Addiction and Mental Health Service
Marilia Libera & Jessica Hampton	The development and feasibility of a psychologist-led screening and modular-based psychological intervention in an Australian intensive care unit: A pilot study
Catherine Moss	Scaling Supervision: Lessons from Designing a Self-Directed Training Program for a Diverse Allied Health Workforce.
Gemma O'Brien & Molly Parry	The role of Occupational Therapy in the management of cognition for patients with encephalitis at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital
Gemma Ray	Healing together in Public Mental Health: Exploring the implementation and impact of Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) within a Child and Youth Mental Health Service.
Lisa Woolcock	To What Extent Do Psychosocial Factors Impact the Levels of Distress in Patients Awaiting Cardiac Surgery?
Tiina Brown	Exploring medication deprescribing practices by the GEMITH (Geriatric Evaluation and Management in the Home) service

Sponsors



We gratefully acknowledge the generous support of our sponsors — The University of Queensland, Griffith University, Queensland University of Technology, Central Queensland University, the University of the Sunshine Coast, and the Translational Research Institute.

Their contributions are instrumental in facilitating research capacity building, collaboration, and knowledge exchange at the Allied Health Research Symposium. We proudly leverage these partnerships and work collaboratively with these institutions to drive impactful research, strengthen our evidence base, and enhance the quality of services we deliver to our communities.

We thank our sponsors for their ongoing dedication to advancing allied health research and supporting a shared vision of excellence and innovation.

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Audience Submission



Submit your questions.

Audience members are invited to submit questions for our panel discussion on Consumer Engagement and Co-Design in Research: Consumer and Clinician Researcher Experiences, Learnings, and Tips.

Please use the QR code below to access the form before and during the session to share any queries, reflections, or themes you would like the panel to address and explore.



Submit your votes.

Audience members are invited to participate in selecting this year's standout presentations across the Oral, Lightning, and Poster categories.

Please use the QR code below to access the voting form on the day of the Symposium and cast your vote for the presentations you feel demonstrated excellence, innovation, and impact. Your input helps recognise and celebrate the achievements of our presenters.

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