



Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN

2018/19 Annual Report



Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN wishes to acknowledge Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Custodians of this land.

We pay our respect and recognise their unique cultures and customs and honour their Elders past, present and emerging.

Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN gratefully acknowledges the financial and other support from the Australian Government Department of Health. While the Australian Government Department of Health has contributed to the funding of this material, the information contained in it does not necessarily reflect the views of the Australian Government and is not advice that is provided, or information that is endorsed, by the Australian Government. The Australian Government is not responsible by negligence or otherwise for any injury, loss or damage however arising from the use of or reliance on the information provided herein.

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\$23.58 million invested to improve accessibility to primary health care



36,691 services delivered for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through the ITC Program



suicide prevention training delivered to over **1000 people**



Education and training delivered to **2609 health professionals**



915 refugees supported to access primary health care



12,019 occasions of non-residential alcohol and other drug services delivered



2 regional medical conferences hosted



383,235 minutes spent supporting people with or at risk of chronic conditions



over 12,388 occasions of service to support people with or at risk of a mental health condition

Chairman's Report



It is my pleasure to present to you the 2018/19 Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN Annual Report.

This year, we have invested \$23.58 million and continued to build strategic partnerships to further develop innovative programs to improve health outcomes for people living in our communities. It is through these partnerships, that we have the privilege of highlighting some of the incredible work that is happening in primary health care across our region.

In November 2018, we reached a particularly significant milestone, securing our three-year funding contract with the Department of Health. This ensures we can continue to collaborate with our funded service providers to improve accessibility to health care.

Our relationships with our hospital and health services, Darling Downs Health and West Moreton Health, continue to go from strength to strength. Our work to ensure clinicians have access to up-to-date clinical referral information has seen Darling Downs HealthPathways celebrate 300 mapped pathways this year, while the West Moreton HealthPathways team have continued to put in the foundational work to have their platform ready to officially launch in 2019/20.

We continue to support people with, or at risk of, a mental health condition, as stepped care becomes further embedded across the region. The launch of our Regional Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drug Foundation Plan in 2019/20 will draw on the critical work that has been undertaken in this area and lay the groundwork for increasing access for people to these vital services into the future.

Similarly, increased consultation with community has resulted in the development of an Aged Care Strategy which will position our PHN to improve health care for older people living in our region and respond to the outcomes from the Australian Government's Royal Commission into Aged Care.

I am extremely proud of the milestones our PHN has achieved this year and I look forward to seeing the PHN grow its impact in 2019/20.

On this note, I would like to take this opportunity to let you know that this is my final report as Chairman of the Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN Board. It has been a pleasure to work with stakeholders and the communities directly impacted by our work to improve primary care for our most vulnerable populations.

I'd like to thank Deputy Chair Dr Pat Stuart for her contribution during my time on the Board, and our fellow Board members for their support.

I commend CEO Merrilyn Strohfeldt for her strong leadership, her passion for better community health and her capabilities around harnessing teamwork and collaboration with our fellow stakeholders in the health sector.

I would also like to acknowledge the ongoing drive and dedication of our Executive Leadership Team and staff, and our health service delivery partners who continue to work with us to improve access to primary health care across the region.

The wonderful achievements outlined in this report would not have been possible without your energy and dedication for the work that we do.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Minz". The signature is written in a cursive style.

John Minz
Chairman
Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN

CEO's Report



2018/19 has been a significant year for our PHN, further building relationships with our key health service delivery partners to focus on providing innovative, person-centred solutions to primary health care needs and gaps in our region.

We continue to work toward our vision 'Making a difference by building healthier communities through a connected, responsive and sustainable primary health care system' with the goals of developing healthy partnerships, healthy systems and healthy people.

This annual report highlights just some of our work over the last 12 months.

This year, we saw stepped care further embedded to support people with, or at risk of, a mental health condition. We also realigned chronic conditions services to the National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions. Our focus for commissioning continues to be on optimising service delivery to ensure that our most vulnerable populations have access to services.

Our education portfolio continues to grow as we hone our focus to provide education and training to our rural and remote workforce. This year, we attracted record numbers to our two conferences: the Gundy Medical Muster in Goondiwindi and the Red Ant Round-Up Medical Conference in Kingaroy. This shows that there is very much an appetite for education to be held in regional communities.

Of course, this year we have seen the drought devastate much of southern Queensland. We were one of six PHNs selected to receive Empowering our Communities (EoC) funding to support drought affected communities build resilience. We continue to work with our farmers, communities and organisations to provide support in impacted areas.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health continues to be a priority, and we continue to look at innovative ways we can collaborate with our Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) to ensure greater access to culturally appropriate care.

This work will strengthen in 2019/20 with the launch of our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and our Foundation Strategic Plan for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, which will guide our commissioning activities into the future.

Our PHN is focused on understanding the primary healthcare needs of our communities. We will continue to work with our stakeholders to ensure that our available budget is targeted to where it can be most impactful.

I would like to thank the Board of Directors for their strategic direction over the past 12 months, and the Clinical Councils and Community Advisory Committees for their feedback. In particular, I would like to acknowledge John Minz, for his contribution to the PHN as Board Chairman and wish him well as he steps down from this role.

I would also like to thank the many health and medical professionals, service providers and our local hospital and health services who continue to work with our PHN.

We are looking forward to continuing to work with you in 2019/20 to improve health care for our communities.

Merrilyn Strohfeldt

CEO
Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN



Building Healthier Communities

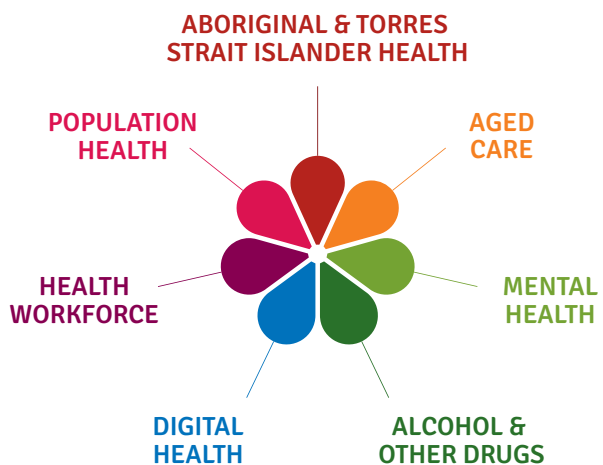
We are a not-for-profit organisation who partners with communities, health care providers, hospital and health services, and state and federal governments to improve primary health care services in our region.

We work within the Darling Downs and West Moreton region to better understand, support and improve the health of people living in our region.

We bring together GPs, general practice staff, allied health professionals, hospital and health services, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs), community service providers, Elders and community members to gaps in the health services that are needed by the people living in our region. We then fund programs and services based on those needs.

We also support primary health care providers, including GPs, practice managers, practice nurses and allied health professionals, to improve the care they provide to their patients.

Our seven key priorities for improving the health of people living in our region are:



We are committed to working with our partners to ensure we fund programs and services that best contribute to building healthier communities.

Our Strategic Direction

Our Vision

Making a difference by building healthier communities through a connected, responsive and sustainable primary healthcare system.

Our Values

- Collaboration
- Accountability
- Respect
- Transparency
- Integrity
- Innovation



Our Goals

Healthy Partnerships

Primary care health partners working together to deliver better health outcomes.



Healthy Systems

Coordinated, integrated care delivered in the right place, at the right time.



Healthy People

A well-trained and supported health workforce delivering better health outcomes.

Our Region

Our PHN covers the Darling Downs and West Moreton region which includes 10 local government areas (LGAs). The major communities in our region are Ipswich and Toowoomba, plus the surrounding communities located in the Lockyer Valley, Scenic Rim, Somerset, South Burnett, Cherbourg, Southern Downs, Goondiwindi and Western Downs LGAs.

We work with two hospital and health services that cover our region, Darling Downs Health and West Moreton Health. The size (95,500km²) of our region and population provides a number of challenges for ensuring people living in our communities can access the health care they need.

Regional Snapshot

560,000+ people living in urban, rural and remote areas

a high population growth rate

54,000 people aged 70 or over

25,000 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders

10,000 migrants and refugees

#1 ranking for physical inactivity in Australia

8 local government areas (LGAs) affected by drought

high rates of anxiety and depression

We were honoured to receive Highly Commended in the Partnership Category at West Moreton Health's Caring Better Together Awards.



Working with our hospital and health services

Our relationship with our local hospital and health services, Darling Downs Health and West Moreton Health, continue to go from strength to strength. Together, we have achieved a number of milestones and progressed new projects to improve the integration of primary and secondary health care in the region.

Connecting patients with the right care: HealthPathways

2018/19 saw considerable progression for both the Darling Downs and West Moreton HealthPathways teams which culminated in a number of key achievements in June 2019.

1. Darling Downs HealthPathways (DDHP) won the Deliver Results category at the 2019 Queensland Health eAwards.
2. This coincided with DDHP reaching 300 mapped pathways.
3. The soft launch period for West Moreton HealthPathways (WMHP) ended in June providing vital feedback to the team before the official launch in August 2019.

HealthPathway is a collaborative project between our PHN and the hospital and health services that provides a web-based information portal supporting primary care clinicians to plan patient care through the healthcare system.

The Darling Downs HealthPathways team took out the Deliver Results category at the 2019 Queensland Health eAwards.



It takes a collaborative approach

Supporting the first 1000 days of life

Over 70 health professionals came together when our PHN teamed up with Darling Downs Health to deliver the inaugural Perinatal Care Symposium in Toowoomba. This one-day Symposium addressed how health professionals, including GPs, nurses, midwives and support staff, can better support the first 1000 days of life through collaborative and consistent care. Topics included breastfeeding, infant sleep, preconception, the first trimester and nutrition in pregnancy.

Promoting health care closer to home

In June, West Moreton Health partnered with our PHN to host a pop-up clinic at the St Ives Shopping Centre. Local community members were invited to attend and find out more about receiving health care closer to home. Using a health-check passport, people were able to have their blood pressure and body mass index (BMI) checked, as well as receive information about the national breast and bowel cancer screening programs, sexual health advice and diabetes.



Reducing potentially preventable ED presentations

Diverting potentially preventable emergency department presentations was the focus of the Spot-On Trial Project, delivered through a strategic partnership between our PHN, Darling Downs Health and the Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS). Through the trial, QAS assessed and triaged patients on site and diverted, where appropriate, patients to a primary care setting for treatment. Extensive evaluation and research has followed the initial trial period to inform future innovative solutions.

Meet our GPLOs

The role of our General Practice Liaison Officers (GPLOs) was further embedded this year to ensure better integration between primary, community and secondary care.

“



Meet Dr Tanusha Ramaloo: West Moreton GPLO

As a GPLO, I get to work with and create meaningful connections within the GP, health service and wider community. My goal in this role is to improve health outcomes for patients and the community by liaising and bringing together the health community, enhancing care where it is needed most. This involves identifying opportunities for GPs to collaborate with West Moreton Health and the PHN. It also includes trying to find timely resolutions for issues that can affect primary health care in our community. It's a fantastic role and I am looking forward to building a strong network of professionals that can work together to overcome future issues we face in our community.

“



Meet Dr Theresa Johnson: Darling Downs GPLO

I love that the GPLO role allows me to strengthen the interface between the hospitals and GPs across the Darling Downs, and to use my local experience and understanding of both the public and private sector to help build mutual understanding and improve patient care. I am passionate about the PHN mission - the right care, in the right place, at the right time, and love working with Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN and Darling Downs Health to continue to achieve this mission as best we can.

Building Primary Care

Our Primary Care Liaison Team focused on providing support in the following areas:

- digital health, including My Health Record
- education and training opportunities
- accreditation support
- practice management
- quality improvement
- cancer screening
- MBS billing
- patient referrals



Hosted **106** education and training events



Hosted **2** major regional conferences and over **24** networking events



Provided education and training to **2096** health care professionals



Getting to know our workforce

This year, we took the time to get to know some of the GPs who dedicate their days to supporting our communities.

Meet Dr Sudheera Edirisinghe. Originally from England, Sudheera now lives in Ipswich with his wife and two children. Having started out as an emergency department doctor, Sudheera made the switch to general practice in 2010 and is now the owner of Winston Glades Family Practice where he practices as a GP.

“Continuity of care and having ownership for the health of an individual and their family as well as variety of clinical exposure. The challenging nature of the job was also appealing as you never know what kind of clinical problems you are going to see next.”

Increasing access to quality education and training

We continue to listen to primary health care professionals in the region so we can increase meaningful education and networking opportunities.

Some of our education topics in 2018/19 included:

- Business for Doctors
- Wound Management
- Mental Health Upskilling
- CPR
- Immunisation
- Cancer Screening
- Coordinated Veteran Care
- Practice Software
- Accreditation
- HR in General Practice
- Allied Health Student Supervision
- PenCS
- Advanced Life Support
- Suicide Prevention
- My Health Record
- Cultural Awareness
- Fertility Treatment
- Rheumatic Heart Disease

We also introduced video conferencing for events to ensure rural and remote health professional have access to education and training opportunities.

We reached 2609 primary health care professionals through our education events.

Connecting health professionals

To support the health community further build their networks, we hosted a number of new and existing networking events this year, including:

- **Health professional meet and greets** – Goondiwindi, Warwick, Stanthorpe, Dalby, Chinchilla, Toowoomba
- **Practice manager network meetings** – Toowoomba, Ipswich and video conferencing for rural practices
- **Allied health networking events** – Kingaroy, Goondiwindi, Warwick, Stanthorpe, Dalby, Toowoomba
- **GP Chapter meetings** - Toowoomba, Dalby, Kingaroy, Murgon, Chinchilla, Goondiwindi, Warwick, Stanthorpe



Red Ant Round-up

KINGAROY 2019



Red Ant Round-Up Medical Conference

Over 150 health professionals descended on Kingaroy to hear from nationwide presenters and educators at the Red Ant Round-Up Medical Conference.

The two-day, two-stream conference was held on 9–10 March in 2019 with conference partners GPTQ and the Kingaroy GP Chapter Network.

The Conference is a key event that is marked on all health professionals' calendars who work across the Darling Downs and West Moreton region. This year, the conference explored, the topic of 'A Country Practice - Everybody's Business'.

“Good opportunities for networking and coming together with other health care professionals which is something that we are not often able to do. Having both medical and nursing streams is much appreciated!” Red Ant Round-Up Medical Conference participant.

The major networking feature was the Conference Gala Dinner with special guest and keynote speaker, Business for Doctors Founder and Director, Dr April Armstrong.



It was wonderful to utilise rostered days off to attend, there was a beautiful mix of professional input, opportunity to connect with others, all the while being challenged to improve current practice.

–2018 GUNDY MEDICAL MUSTER PARTICIPANT.



Gundy Medical Muster

The biennial Gundy Medical Muster kicked off on Friday, 7 September 2018 enticing health professionals from across the region to experience a weekend of education and networking in a rural health setting.

The three-day conference is organised by local clinicians from the Goondiwindi Medical Centre, in collaboration with our PHN, who are passionate about ensuring rural health clinicians and professionals have access to high quality education and training.

The 2018 event attracted the largest numbers to date with over 150 rural health professionals

heading to Goondiwindi to take part in a jam-packed program.

Specialist speakers from multiple professions and services covered the conferences conference theme - 'Extremes of life: Health care in the beginning and the end' with a variety of lectures and panel discussion keeping participants engaged.

“Panel discussions with community members allowed an understanding of how care needs to be tailored to specific patients and the difficulties that are commonly encountered caring for patients at home.” 2018 Gundy Medical Muster participant.

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–2018 GUNDY MEDICAL MUSTER PARTICIPANT.



Working together to make a difference

We partnered with a number of health organisation's this year to deliver integrated education opportunities for health professionals in the region.

The Chronic Disease in Regional & Rural Australia - Obesity, Prostate Cancer & Mental Health Conference was held in partnership with TSBE, the University of Southern Queensland and our PHN, as a part of USQ's Resilient Regions Week in October 2018.

Allied health providers gathered in Toowoomba in April 2019 to hear from numerous speakers about the advantages of student placements for their business and the community. The event was delivered by Southern Queensland Rural Health in partnership with TSBE and our PHN.

The Better Business for GPs Series was held from January 2019 to June 2019 in partnership with Toowoomba and Surat Basin Enterprise (TSBE) to upskill and assist general practice owners improve their business.

Women from across the region were invited to participate in the Women in Health Series which provides education and networking opportunities to women working in health. The event series is delivered through a partnership with TSBE and will continue into 2020.

Building opportunities in primary care through targeted projects

Opioid Substitution Treatment Project

We are working in collaboration with Health Workforce Queensland to investigate the issue of opioid substitution treatment prescribing and dispensing in the Darling Downs and West Moreton region.

This year, the project worked to:

- build a comprehensive understanding of service gaps;
- better understand reasons for GPs and pharmacists to engage, or not to engage, in the practice of opioid substitution treatment prescribing and dispensing; and
- identify any solutions that may be implemented to address service delivery gaps and meet the need of our community.

A Project Reference Group has been established with local primary health care representatives, including GPs and general practice staff, pharmacists, service providers and consumers to progress the project into the 2019/20 year.

Working to bring care closer to home

Our PHN has teamed up with healthdirect Australia to enable the healthdirect Video Call service in targeted locations across our region. The Telehealth Pilot Project allows GPs, psychologists and social workers to deliver mental health support to patients via video consultation.

Further work is currently being undertaken to increase the use of this platform, reducing barriers for patients when accessing health services throughout the Darling Downs and West Moreton region.

Our participating practices:

General Practices

- Goondiwindi Medical Centre
- Millmerran Medical Centre
- Taabinga Family Practice
- Tara Medical Centre

Psychology Practices

- Barry Sheehan
- Gillian Bensley
- Centre for Healthy Living



My Health Record

“

All my wife needs to do is tell the treating clinician that I have a My Health Record, and they will be able to find all of the important information they need.

—PETER TULLY, DISABILITY ADVOCATE AND MY HEALTH RECORD USER.

Embracing digital health to improve patient care

Meet Peter Tully, a local Ipswich community member and passionate advocate for the disability community.

Peter is just one of millions of Australians who are now benefitting from the introduction of My Health Record (MyHR). MyHR is an online platform that provides a summary of a patient's health information such as allergies, current conditions and treatment, and medication information which can be shared securely between registered health care providers who are involved in the patient's care.

In 2018/19, our PHN partnered with the Australian Digital Health Agency to embed MyHR as every day practice with general practices, allied health providers and pharmacists.

Our dedicated Digital Health Team worked closely with these health care providers to ensure they were registered and ready to inform their patients about the benefits of having a MyHR.

During the roll out of MyHR and the opt-out period (16 July 2018 – 31 January 2019) the team attended a number of events and meetings across the region to ensure that consumers were also aware of the benefits of having a MyHR.

Consumers, like Peter Tully, became champions for ensuring that communities understood how having a MyHR could assist with their health care.

“To give you an example, what do you think happens when I become unwell and get admitted to hospital?” Peter said.

“My wife, who also has a disability, gets overwhelmed and is obviously worried about me and can't tell the doctors my critical health information, like medications and my medical history.

“However, with having a My Health Record, all my wife needs to do is tell the treating clinician that I have a My Health Record, and they will be able to find all of the important information they need.”

Moving forward, our PHN's digital health activities are focused on the adoption of digital technologies including telehealth/video calling capability and improving health data standards to better support primary care.

Our Digital Health Team achieved:

100% of general practices and pharmacies engaged about MyHR

over 93% of general practices registered for MyHR

over 83% of pharmacies registered for MyHR

50,000 consumers reached face-to-face during opt-out

489,000 consumers reached in total (including online)

Goolburri is one of the providers for the ITC Program. Pictured is local Mandandanji man and artist Daniel Blades, Uncle Andrew Walker and Trent Adams from Goolburri.



Closing the Gap for our

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community

Partnering with local medical services

Ensuring our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community has access to culturally appropriate care is a priority for our PHN.

*Tracy is a local mum who was recently diagnosed with sleep apnoea, and needed podiatry treatments so she could get back on her feet again.

Through the Integrated Team Care (ITC) Program, Tracy was able to access the support she needed.

Local ITC provider Cherbourg Regional Aboriginal and Islander Community Controlled Health Services (CRAICCHS) supported her through visits to the family's home, a sleep apnoea machine, podiatry treatments and transport to and from her various health appointments.

The ITC Program works to improve access to primary health care services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and is delivered by Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) across the region.

ITC offers care coordination and supplementary services to support people with a chronic condition, while ensuring patients can access affordable medicines, transport services for medical appointments, medical aids and access to a wider array of community services.

The program also funds Outreach Workers for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to increase access to medical appointments.

*Name has been changed to maintain privacy

ACCHOs delivering ITC across our region include:

- Carbal Medical Services – Toowoomba and Southern Downs
- CRAICCHS – South Burnett and Cherbourg
- Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH) - through a partnership with Brisbane North PHN – Ipswich, Somerset and Lockyer Valley (through Kambu Health)
- Goondir Health Services – Western Downs
- Indigicare - Goondiwindi

As one of the providers of the ITC Program, Carbal Medical Services CEO Brian Hewitt said the program has reduced the number of people accessing their services for the long term.

“Before the ITC Program we would see people accessing our services and they would be forever a part of the program,” Brian said.

“Now that we have the ITC Program, we are seeing a significant rise in people getting the support and aids that they need to be able to recover and not have to rely so significantly on the health service anymore.”

In the last financial year, the ITC Program as a whole saw 111 people discharged from the program, and 202 patients move on to self-manage

their care without the need for care coordination.

A key benefit of the program is that it is delivered by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff who live and work in the community every day and have continuous contact with their clients. This connection ensures they can assist people to access the right services at the right time and by the right provider.

This year, our ITC program provided:

14,435
care coordination services

11,881
supplementary services

2282
transport services

5572
clinical services

803
additional services

32,691
total services



All smiles as participants finish a deadly steps session

Improving health by taking deadly steps together

Local Ipswich women, Connie, is learning that taking small steps, together with her community, can have a major impact on overall wellness.

Connie recently completed Deadly Steps Together, a health and wellness program tailored specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living with, or at risk of, developing a chronic condition.

Since taking on the program, Connie has already started implementing changes into her everyday life.

“The program’s been really good, it’s made a difference in my life already – especially with healthy eating and exercise – and I have suggested to a few friends and family members that they should think about coming too,” Connie said.

The program works alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, community members, patients and Indigenous health staff with the aim to educate the community about health and exercise, empowering them to build and maintain a healthier lifestyle.

The group environment develops a support network where participants can encourage each other and help each other overcome individual barriers.

“It’s nice to build a rapport with everyone in the group and I look forward to the sessions - it’s great to come here, and also have a good laugh with friends,” Connie said.

Developed by West Moreton Health, participants perform 75 minutes of exercise twice a week. Each session is then followed by a yarning facilitated by an exercise physiologist and Indigenous health workers

Using culture to re-connect

Local Dalby and Oakey Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members are embracing art to re-connect with their culture.

Goondir Health Services' Cultural Development Program introduces culture back into the lives of participants to improve their social and emotional wellbeing. The program runs over a two-year period and takes participants through a range of cultural and traditional activities.

Shane regularly takes part in the program and strongly recommends it for people who may feel they have lost touch with their culture.

“It was good to find out more about my people’s past, who our totems are, our cultural significance, our stories, our traditional foods,” Shane said.

“I discovered my creativity actually runs through the other side of my family who I never knew existed until this program.”

Participants are exposed to boomerang and didgeridoo making, cultural dances, storytelling, painting, and takes them on tours to various significant cultural sites including The Ration Shed in Cherbourg, the Bunya Mountains and Gummingurru near Gowrie Junction.

“It’s a great program, you learn new skills that you never knew you were capable of. It helps you get in touch with your creative side, it gives me real spiritual enlightenment,” Shane said.

This program runs in Dalby and Oakey and participants can choose when they attend during the length of the program.



Closing the Gap, one initiative at a time

Early in February 2019, our PHN reached out to our community asking them to submit initiatives that work towards Closing the Gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our region. Ten initiatives were selected which will continue until the end of 2019.

Ration Shed Reconciliation Fun Run

The annual Ration Shed Reconciliation Fun Run has been running in the Cherbourg community for the last six years. The run raises money for the Ration Shed museum and provides a fun and creative way to get the community moving and thinking about health and fitness.

This initiative empowers the Cherbourg community to demonstrate their pride, achievements, history and aspirations. It supports the local economy by attracting people from inside and outside the region. The 2019 event reached a record number of 511 participants.

Strong Mothers, Strong Families

Strong Mothers, Strong Families was a successful six-week pilot program that worked to provide vulnerable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women the opportunity to assess, understand, and improve their social and emotional wellbeing.

The program provided mums and dads access to culturally appropriate antenatal, parenting and general health services empowering participants to contribute positively to their own health and wellbeing throughout the pregnancy and when the baby was born.

Mum-of-two with a third one on the way, *Gemma, took part in the program. One of Gemma's children was not in her custody and she was engaged with an alcohol and other drug treatment program to assist with her relationship with alcohol. After hearing about the Strong Mothers, Strong Families program, Gemma recognised that there was a need for her to change in order to regain custody of her son. After completing the program, Gemma was able to realise what she can do to make a new life for herself and her children and is working towards a healthier home environment for her children.

CALM Suicide Prevention

A CALM Suicide Prevention Workshop delivered culturally appropriate training to 14 participants willing to improve their knowledge about suicide, while learning techniques to have meaningful conversations with someone who they may be concerned about. The workshop aimed to increase the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people throughout our region, ensuring cultural awareness and cultural safety were key foundations. All participants in the program stated that it was worthwhile training and they would strongly recommend it to others.

*Name has been changed to maintain privacy

Participants enjoying the sixth annual Ration Shed Reconciliation Fun Run.

“

This is a beautiful event. It is an event that shows our strengths, our dignity, our humanity, it feels so good to work for the positive. We hold that in our hearts. We see our Museum as a sacred place, a keeping place, a place of healing and reconciliation.

—CHERBOURG RESIDENT,
AUNTY SANDRA MORGAN.



Children getting creative at the Goolburri Early Years and Infancy Program.



Going above and beyond for families

Supporting family is the top priority for Simone, Community Care Coordinator at Goolburri Aboriginal Health Advancement Co. Simone not only assists with coordinating prenatal and postnatal care for new mums, dads and their babies, she also runs the Early Years and Infancy Program funded by our PHN.

“Simply put, we engage with families who are having trouble. We work to build trust then help them overcome barriers that are preventing them from improving their family’s health and wellbeing,” Simone said.

Co-ordinating care for parents and being responsive to their immediate needs is helping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families thrive.

“We have been working with families to highlight the importance of getting all their health checks, immunisation’s, oral health checks and prenatal scans,” Simone said.

“We provide transport for mum and bub so they can get to these important appointments, we are currently transporting several families to playgroup of which we have an extensive waitlist for pickups.”

Overcoming transport barriers and educating parents about better health aren’t the only topics Simone and her colleagues are helping families with.

“We coordinate with some parents to have safe contact visits which helps them to spend more time with their children, this helps them reconnect and build a bond.”

The program is becoming popular with more families reaching out for support than ever before.

“There is a lot of work to do but it’s worth it when we see mum, dad and bub happy and positive about their future.”

Building a culturally inclusive organisation: Our commitment

This year, our PHN is working to improve the way we work and represent Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and customs through developing our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP). Our PHN made a commitment to commence a Reflect RAP (the first of the four RAP levels) at the beginning of 2019.

The Reflect RAP is being led by an internal RAP Working Group (RWG) tasked with looking internally at our PHN’s processes and procedures identifying areas that can be improved to have better representation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The RWG will scope out and explore our sphere of influence, developing relationships with stakeholders to help decide on our vision for reconciliation.

The RAP is a process of patience that requires all areas of the organisation to be analysed and considered. Working with an external Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advisory group will ensure that we are fully culturally inclusive and the voice of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community is heard.

Thirteen members sit on the RWG with representation from Senior Management, the Board, and our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health team included.

The development of our Reflect RAP represents the overall desire of our PHN to build stronger relationships and to connect and share our values with local medical and primary health care providers to improve the health and wellbeing of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.



Local artist Maurice Woodley (pictured far right) unveiling his artwork which is now being used at Ipswich Hospital to create a culturally welcoming environment for patients and their families and loved ones.

Improving health outcomes for

older Australian's

Providing more care at 'home' in RACFs

RACF Nurse Guide

Empowering nurses to be advocates for their patients within residential aged care facilities (RACFs) and allowing residents to stay 'home' when experiencing deteriorating health was the focus of a recent trial project in the West Moreton region.

The Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF) project was developed through a partnership with West Moreton Health and the University of Southern Queensland (USQ).

For the first time, the project culminated in the development of a comprehensive Nurse Care Guide to assist registered nurses and personal care staff recognise patient deterioration and provide enhanced evidence-based care to RACF residents.

The care guides were trialled at two local aged care facilities - Milford Grange and Riverview

Gardens - from January to June 2019 enhancing thoroughness of nursing assessments, assisting in care planning and promoting early health intervention to prevent avoidable health declines and hospitalisations. Both facilities were also supported by a West Moreton Health nurse practitioner.

"The Nurse Care Guides have been a great reference point. They have been useful for a lot of situations when decisions to make are not clear cut." Adrian, register nurse at one of the trial RACFs.

The project also included training sessions and concurrent research into the impact of the guides was conducted in partnership with USQ with a view to expand the use of the guides throughout the Darling Downs and West Moreton region.



“

It (The Care Guide) supports us in our decision making, ensuring that we're doing the right thing and that we are capable of managing these people here, rather than sending them off to people that don't know them. It's much better.



26% reduction
in post-hospitalisation
re-admissions



reduction in category
1, 2 and 5 presentations
to the emergency department



increased confidence
in assessment and management
of older adults

“

We understand that one of the better ways we can support people living with dementia is by ensuring they are surrounded by healthcare staff who can understand dementia and have compassion for how it impacts their daily life.



Supporting care for RACF residents with dementia

Be patient. Stop and listen. Be more understanding. Ensure residents have comfortable socks.

These are just some of the things that participants took away from innovative new training funded by our PHN this year which aims to equip residential aged care facility (RACF) staff with the skills and understanding to support residents with dementia.

Churches of Christ in Queensland, who hold the exclusive licence to deliver the Virtual Dementia Tour (VDT) across Australia, delivered the training to help raise awareness about the multi-sensory challenges of dementia.

The VDT is evidence-based and scientifically proven to give a person with a healthy brain the closest experience of what dementia might be like.

The VDT was delivered to 26 RACFs and 520 staff

One of the incredible things about the VDT is that it isn't just about training nurses and GPs at RACFs, it is also about providing training to other ancillary staff, who can provide incidental support and understanding.

Rebecca Hogan, Operations Manager for the Churches of Christ in Queensland - Virtual Dementia Tour said the VDT is at the forefront in driving positive social change and is creating shared value across the sector through deeper human connectedness.

“Awareness raising is a two-way street and promotes the importance of information exchange within communities in order to improve mutual understanding to bring about the necessary change in attitude and behaviour,” said Ms Hogan.

RACF staff across the region who participated in the training provided their learnings from the experience:

“I can understand them better now. This has changed my way of looking towards them. I can now understand their state of mind. I can treat them better now. It had a great impact on me.” Infin8 Aged Care

“Gave me a realistic insight of what people living with dementia had to encounter on a daily basis. As an AIN, I will do my very best to assist them with ADL having to experience what challenge they face.” Bupa Rangeville

“Changed my view in regard to the care and time that dementia patients need. I never realised how difficult it is for them to hear understand what someone is saying to them.” Carinity Colthup Manor

We understand that one of the better ways we can support people living with dementia is by ensuring they are surrounded by healthcare staff who can understand dementia and have compassion for how it impacts residents daily life. This valuable training will continue to positively impact older people living in the Darling Downs and West Moreton region.

A plan to help the health and wellbeing of older people

Strategic Plan for Older People's Care

Our PHN has strengthened our commitment to improving the care for older people living in our region through funding the development of the Strategic Plan for Older People's Care.

The Strategic Plan for Older People's Care has been developed following extensive consultation with a range of stakeholders, including residential and community aged care providers, acute service providers and GPs, peak bodies for older people, West Moreton Health and Darling Downs Health, and research representatives.

We want to ensure that older people in our region are able to enjoy optimal wellbeing and 'living well' up to and including the end of life.

The Strategic Plan for Older People's Care will position our PHN to respond to the results of the Australian Government's Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.



Understanding care at the end of life

The End of Life Care Framework is a result of a first-of-its-kind collaboration in the West Moreton region which has eventuated in the establishment of the West Moreton Care at the End of Life Collaborative.

Due to the rapid and extensive development of areas such as Ripley and Springfield, services and organisations that provide care at the end of life are facing significant challenges. The population increase will impact services substantially, requiring increases in all aspects of service delivery, including capacity, capability and workforce.

The Framework offers a baseline for knowledge and understanding for health professionals and professional caregivers providing care at the end of life in the West Moreton region.

The committee was established in July 2018 to develop and implement an action plan which aligned to the Queensland Health statewide strategy for end of life care.

The development of the Framework was preceded by a Flying in Formation Forum in West Moreton for health professionals and professional care givers to improve the care they provide at the end of life.

Left image: Renata, Denise and Tanusha from our PHN team attend the Flying in Formation Forum.

Our Year in Review

2018

July

NAIDOC week 2018
celebrated across
the region

August

September

Stepped care is introduced to better support people living with and/or at risk of a mental health condition

The Gundy Medical Muster is held in Goondiwindi with a record number of medical professionals in attendance
Low Intensity Mental Health Campaign is launched to promote PHN-funded programs that people across the region can access without a GP referral

Our PHN is awarded Highly Commended in the Partnership Category at West Moreton Health's Caring Better Together Awards

2019

January

New providers begin delivering services to improve access for people with or at risk of chronic conditions

Funding is provided to local communities impacted by drought to support community-led initiatives that build resilience under the Australian Government's Empowering our Communities (EoC) initiative

My Health Record opt out date is reached. 100% of general practices and pharmacies engaged by our digital health team and over 489,000 consumers reached through face-to-face and online engagement

The Residential Aged Care Facility (RACF) Nurse Care Guide is released in collaboration with West Moreton Health to support residents access the care they need at 'home'

February

Our commitment to Closing the Gap is further reinforced with the intention to develop our Reconciliation Action Plan endorsed by the PHN Board

March

Springfield Office officially opens

The Red Ant Round-Up Medical Conference is held in Kingaroy with a record number of primary health care professionals attending from across the region

October

November

December

Three-year funding agreement is received by the Department of Health ensuring our PHN can continue to collaborate with our funded service providers to improve accessibility to health care across the region

April

May

June

Diabeteshub.com.au is launched in partnership with Darling Downs Health, Toowoomba Hospital Foundation and the Queensland Clinical Excellence Division to support people living with diabetes, their loved ones and health professionals

Awarded the Deliver Results category at the 2019 Queensland Health eAwards for Darling Downs HealthPathways

Darling Downs Health Pathways reaches 300 pathways

Care at the end of Life and Strategic Plan for Older People delivered to develop strategies to support older people in our region enjoy optimal wellbeing and 'live well' up to and including the end of life

Regional Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Foundation Plan delivered to look at a whole of system approach to support people living with or at risk of mental health conditions

\$23.58 million invested by our PHN into communities to improve accessibility to primary health care



Placing individuals at the centre of their

Mental Health care

Introducing Stepped Care

In response to the Australian Government's mental health reform, primary mental health care services funded by our PHN were aligned to a stepped care approach in 2018.

Stepped care ensures individuals can access primary mental health care services that are best matched to their individual needs. These services are offered from the least (low intensity services for people at risk of experiencing mild mental health conditions) to the most intensive (high intensity services for people with severe and persistent mental health conditions) allowing people to move through the continuum of care as their needs change.

Planning for the future

To ensure we are best placed to adapt to the changing needs of our communities, our PHN, West Moreton Health and Darling Downs Health have committed to joint planning for integrated mental health, alcohol and other drug and suicide prevention services.

The Regional Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drug Regional Plan was delivered in June 2019 and is focused on people and their journeys through the mental health and alcohol and other drug service system. The implementation of the plan will lay the foundation for ongoing collaboration and improved coordination of services and will be launched with stakeholders in late 2019.

What could have improved your experience?

Our PHN recognises the value and contribution from people with a lived experience to shape our activities and services. This ensures we have a person-centred approach to optimise positive outcomes for people living with a mental health condition.

In August 2018, we hosted a Lived Experience Workshop to ask individuals who had lived experience of a mental health condition:

- What is working well with mental health in our region?
- What are the barriers to accessing services?
- What could be done better?

Conversations from the day continue to inform decisions about stepped care.



Jimmy Patch Illustrations captured the discussion.

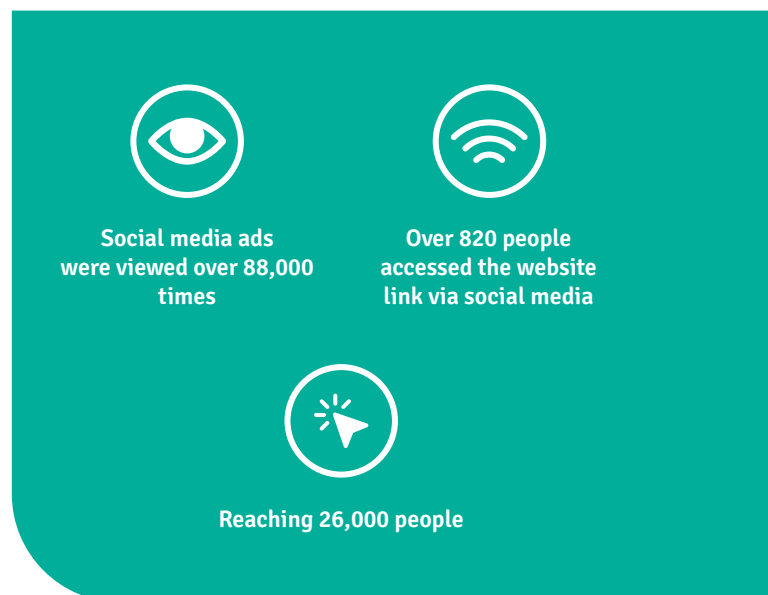


Getting back on track

We all need a little bit of extra help from time to time to help us get back on track.

That was the message shared through the Low Intensity Mental Health Campaign rolled out for three months from September to November 2018 to promote free, confidential mental health services funded by our PHN. The campaign was delivered just in time for key mental health dates including R U OK? Day in September, and Mental Health Week in October.

The campaign material continues to be circulated to promote these easily accessible services for community.





Daniel painted his piece of artwork to represent the connection within the group who completed the INSIST training and their hope to keep people safe from suicide

Supporting communities impacted by suicide

Daniel's Story

With connection, learning and helping we have hope to save lives from suicide. This was the message that Mandandanji man Daniel Blades hoped to convey in a special piece of artwork he painted while completing Indigenous Networking Suicide Intervention Skills Training (INSIST) funded by our PHN.

INSIST is a culturally-appropriate, two-day intervention training program for preventing suicide among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, especially youth, and is a sister program to Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST).

The training was delivered in 2019 by LivingWorks Education Australia and was one of the many suicide prevention training programs delivered over a six-month period under our PHN's Community-Based Suicide Prevention Program.

At the end of Day 1, participants were asked to do something overnight for self-care, whatever that meant for them. For Daniel, that meant painting a piece of artwork for the group.

Over 1000 people attended 55 suicide prevention education and training sessions, which will continue to positively impact the communities where they live, work and play.

Daniel describes the meaning behind his painting below:

“The painting represents the connection within the group and the hope to keep people safe from suicide. The painting features the River of Suicide image from ASIST, and the spirits leaving the Earth for dreaming. The crosses represent the Western world.

The blue dots up the top represent when people told their stories, the tears that they shed. The story lines cover the artwork as it is sharing story (such as in 'Hear the Story') that deepens connections between people.

The symbols on the bottom left of the painting represent each of the participants and trainers, and the hands, daughter's hand prints, represent the helping hands of those wanting to help people with thoughts of suicide.

“What I love about the painting is that it is a very real and honest representation of the issue; suicide is real and runs through our community but with connection, learning and helping we have hope to save lives from suicide.”



Our providers in 2018/19

Low Intensity

- Richmond Fellowship Queensland
- Lives Lived Well
- Carbal Medical Services
- Burnett Allied Care
- Mallow Wellbeing
- TOMNET
- Rural and Remote Mental Health

Target Psychological Therapies

- Alexandra Bryant
- Artius Health
- Barry Sheehan
- Centre for Healthy Living
- Gillian Bensley
- Heather Linsley
- Creative Holistic Counselling
- Goolburri Aboriginal Health Advancement Co

- Illuminable Minds
- Lainie Nicholson
- Lifeline Darling Downs and South West
- Lumsden Psychology
- Mindware Psychology
- Nadine Hinchliff Therapy Services
- Rural Sky
- Searle Psychology & Mediation
- Therapy Pro

Mental Health Nurse Care

- Mi-Mind Centre and Our House Our Haven
- RHealth

Health Service Navigators

- Neami National
- RHealth

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health Services

- Carbal Medical Services
- Goolburri Aboriginal Health Advancement Co
- HealthWISE

Community-Based Suicide Prevention Activities

- Lifeline Darling Downs and South West QLD
- Sallyanne Keevers
- Ipswich Hospital Foundation
- Rural and Remote Mental Health
- Black Dog Institute
- headspace Warwick (RHealth)
- headspace Ipswich (Aftercare)
- headspace Toowoomba (United Synergies)
- ReachOut Australia

Building resilience in drought affected communities

Supporting communities do what they do best

Embracing the strength of rural communities has been at the heart of initiatives funded by our PHN in the past year to support farmers, their families, neighbours and local businesses as they deal with the effects of drought.

Queensland is facing one of the most severe droughts in history. At the end of 2018, our PHN was one of six selected across Australia to receive funding under the Department of Health's Empowering our Communities (EoC) initiative to respond and support these communities build resilience.

Within our region eight local government areas (LGAs) are declared as drought affected. These areas include Goondiwindi, Southern Downs, Western Downs, Lockyer Valley, Somerset, Toowoomba, Cherbourg and South Burnett.

Under the initiative, over 25 community-led initiatives were funded to connect and encourage people to look out for themselves and their fellow community members.

One of the initiatives was from the Pikedale community, where gatherings are held to give people the opportunity to come together and support each other.

Group spokesperson, John Pratt, said the gatherings are typically held in local woolsheds, machinery sheds and packing sheds, ensuring that the conversation is brought directly to farmers.

"There is an added extra financial and mental stress on families and these gatherings have given everyone something to look forward to and are vital," John said.

“At these events, everyone has a chance to share their ideas and grievances which is very helpful and leave producers with a feeling of not being alone.”

In addition to the community-led initiatives, funding has also been provided to roll-out the Lifeline Darling Downs and South West QLD Community Connections Program.

The program recognises that stigma can be a deterrent for people living in rural communities to seek assistance, and often local, trusted advocates can provide a safe gateway to care.

Through Community Connections, community members are trained to recognise and support people who may be struggling which helps to build resilience in communities for years to come.

Through these initiatives, our PHN has been able to work with community leaders, farmers and their families, and local community organisations to enable better mental health, suicide prevention, and social and emotional wellbeing support.

Empowering our Communities Calendar: No one is alone, we are in this together

Local community leaders stepped up to be featured in a special edition calendar that confronts stigma and promotes awareness of mental health support for people living in drought affected communities.

The calendar has been developed through a partnership between Neami National and our PHN to share stories of community leaders encouraging people to 'speak up' or seek help when they need it.



Neami National Health Service Navigator Lisa Bamforth presents the drought calendar with Liam Maher from our mental health team.



Rick works with NewAccess, a free mental health coaching program

Rick's Story

“I’ve always been a community minded person. All my adult life I have liked to do my bit for the community. This program, NewAccess, is very accessible and guided self-help. My job is a guide for people. The work is broken down into stages, it’s not overwhelming, and we work through it week to week. If you catch people early enough, you can nip problems in the bud and help people move forward.”

Mary's Story

“Our community was rocked by two suicides quite close together and I felt compelled to do something. I kept reading about the rates of suicide being so much higher in rural men and how men need to change. But I thought, ‘I like rural men just how they are!’, and that we just need to change how we communicate the message about suicide.”

“

The bottom line is that people are always there for you. What rural communities do really well is wrap their arms around each other.

-MARY, FOUNDER OF ARE YOU BOGGED MATE?



Mary is the founder of Are You Bugged Mate? and spends her days helping country blokes talk about mental health and suicide.

Reducing stigma for our LGBTQI+ communities

Connecting youth in our region

Our PHN sponsored the inaugural Lifeline Darling Downs Rainbow Connections Conference to reduce stigma for the LGBTQI+ community. The conference brought together 150 people from around the region and focused on topics such as transgender rights, challenging homophobia, support of the LGBTQI+ community, LGBTQI+ issues in rural areas and mental health.

Well-known personalities and LGBTQI+ advocates Benjamin Law, Georgie Stone and Rebekah Robertson travelled interstate to attend this conference supporting young people in the Darling Downs community.

Promoting positive inclusivity

We also teamed up with ReachOut in 2019 to develop a series of resources to break down stigma and promote positive inclusivity for LGBTQI+ youth living in Queensland. The resources cover topics such as 'How to get support if you're feeling anxious about your sexuality' for young people and 'Supporting teens with their sexuality' for parents.

A video featuring Brisbane Hustlers team members who spoke about their sexuality and how they found their tribe through their team was also developed.

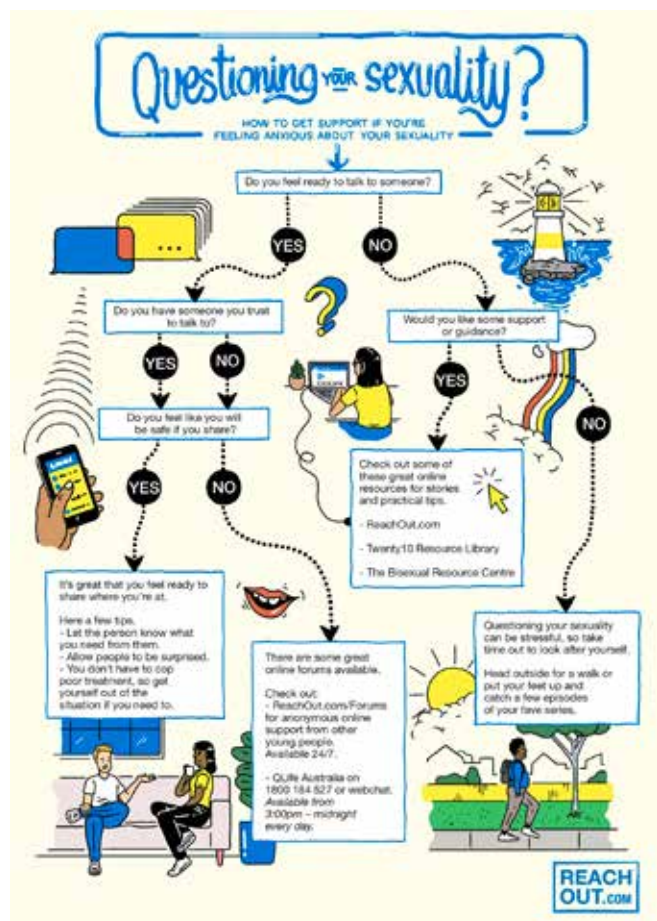


Guest speakers and LGBTQI+ advocates, Rebekah Robertson and Georgie Stone.

“What Lifeline Darling Downs and South West QLD achieved was ground breaking as this was a regional Queensland first in providing a conference that gave support to the LGBTQI+ community and agency workers, addressed LGBTQI+ mental health and suicide prevention, built safer communities and fostered innovative ways in peer led support and advocacy networking.”

LGBTQI+ young people are particularly at risk when it comes to mental health and suicide. ReachOut has always been a voice for young LGBTQI+ young people and we know that sharing stories can play a vital role in understanding their own experiences and decreasing feelings of isolation.

—ASHLEY DE SILVA, CEO OF REACHOUT



Alcohol and other drugs:

Reducing stigma, increasing support

People experiencing alcohol and other drug dependence continue to be offered a new sense of hope and health through alcohol and other drug treatment programs funded by our PHN.

Demand continues to increase for evidence-based alcohol and other drug treatment services across rural and regional Australia. In our region, we are working with service providers to improve access to treatment for people affected by their own or another person's use of alcohol and other drugs.

Providing alcohol and other drug support in rural communities

“Without Lives Lived Well, I wouldn't have got this far in my life.”

“At the start of the year I was starting to smoke cannabis every day. I noticed that my life was starting to go downhill because I had previously been using drugs to cope with my life and realised that it was not the way to go again.”
Lives Lived Well program participant.

Our PHN continues to fund a number of non-residential treatment services for people seeking alcohol and other drug support.

Lives Lived Well is one of these providers, supporting people through a range of comprehensive services. Delivering to communities across the Darling Downs region, Lives Lived Well alcohol and other drug treatment services work hand-in-hand with their mental health support services. The team also provides culturally appropriate treatment for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

“I had help in the past and it never seemed to work. Working with Lives Lived Well was the longest I had worked with someone and got the support and guidance I needed. At the start I had trouble with being able to socialise and

meet people. He helped me gain confidence to meet new people, make new friendships and create a new lifestyle that I feel proud and confident about.

I felt like I had let my family down in the past, but now my family, especially my mother, has noticed the change in my life and she has said she is proud of me. I am now going to the gym and started doing a course. I have made a better relationship with my child and partner and have been able to be a role model for my younger sibling. Twelve months ago, I would not have thought I'd be able to get this far with my life. Thank you.” Lives Lived Well program participant continued.

Lives Lived Well's Clinical Services Manager for Southwest Queensland, James Curtain, said providing person-centred care was critical to enable clients to recover.

“What we do is we focus on the client, we identify goals, what they want to get out of it and what's the purpose driving them to change,” James said.

“Then we work on evidence-based strategies, applying specific knowledge and skills to help achieve those goals. Then we check in to follow up with each client and help to maintain that motivation to change.”

Lives Lived Well has had over 600 participants in their programs over the last 12 months covering Chinchilla, Dalby, Kingaroy, Toowoomba and Warwick.

Providing support where it's needed most

Providing holistic, family inclusive and recovery-oriented alcohol and other drug treatment services is the driver for Sue Gibbons, Team Leader for EACH's Alcohol and Other Drug Program in Queensland.

EACH is funded by our PHN to deliver alcohol and other drug and chronic conditions services to people living in the West Moreton region through their Ipswich service.

"What we are finding is that when we are approached by individuals who have recently been diagnosed with a chronic condition, and are also needing support for alcohol and other drug use, they are much more willing to engage in, and follow through with the program," Sue said.

To ensure holistic care, EACH also works closely with the individuals to identify if their mental health needs additional support. Then a tailored, planned approach can be taken.

"Poor mental health can often be related to alcohol and other drug use which can contribute to various chronic conditions. We work to look at all these areas when working alongside each individual and then look at how several factors may be contributing to dependence," Sue said.

"Sometimes it's not direct support that is needed. We have worked with individuals that need housing support, advocacy or are having trouble with their referrals. Working with family members or significant others is also an important part of the process."

*Kim's Story

***Kim is a 33-year-old married mum of two children, working within her professional career. Kim sought help regarding her alcohol use, low mood, anxiety, tearfulness, lack of energy, and interpersonal difficulties. Kim was unsure about specific goals at the beginning but knew she wanted to feel better.**

She was hoping to improve her anxiety and to reflect on her interpersonal issues. By session three, she had identified that drinking alcohol was problematic for her and wanted to make changes. She was also linked in with a GP to gain additional support for her anxiety and depression.

Once deciding that alcohol consumption was an issue for her, several strategies and options were offered which focused on controlled drinking and harm minimisation.

Since finishing treatment, she has ceased drinking alcohol, reporting that as a result of this, she felt better than she had her entire adult life. She is as happy, enthusiastic, and energetic as she was when she was a teenager. In addition, Kim stopped smoking cigarettes, and began participating in cross-fit several times a week."

*Name has been changed to maintain privacy

Our 2018/19 non-residential providers:

- Lives Lived Well - Chinchilla, Dalby, Kingaroy, Toowoomba and Warwick
- EACH
- Ted Noffs Foundation
- HOA Drug Arm Australasia
- Teen Challenge Queensland

Our year in numbers:



1501 new clients accepted into services



463 active clients per month (average)



12,019 occasions of service



“

Sunrise Way showed me I could live a life without drugs and alcohol and actually enjoy being part of society instead of fighting against it.

-DAN, SUNRISE WAY PARTICIPANT



Rebuilding lives... The Sunrise Way

After 24 years of alcohol and drug use, Dan didn't want to be around anymore. He knew he had to make a change or something grim was about to happen.

"I didn't like myself, I didn't like life and I didn't like the world," Dan said.

Sunrise Way is a residential rehabilitation facility based in Toowoomba that provides culturally appropriate, long-term holistic support to help people achieve their recovery goals. Sunrise Way provides group therapy, individual counselling, art and music therapy, a wide range of life skills, and nutrition and exercise programs during the rehabilitation process and was Dan's home for 26 weeks during his recovery.

The program provides evidence-based therapy delivered by a highly qualified and skilled multi-disciplinary team. Participants travel from all over Australia to enrol in the program.

Before a person is accepted into the program, staff undertake a comprehensive assessment to determine if Sunrise Way is the best fit for that person's needs. If so, Sunrise Way will then support the individual to access appropriate withdrawal management before entering treatment. If an assessment has deemed Sunrise Way is not appropriate, they will provide a referral to a service or support that is more suitable.

"My life has changed so much over the last nine months, I didn't think it possible to live a life without drugs and alcohol I thought life would be too boring and too dull and I didn't want to face that," Dan said.

"I got admitted to Sunrise where they loved me back to life."

Sunrise Way supports participants to lift themselves out of addiction, instilling social and community mindfulness, strengthening their resolve and purpose and leaving them with the skills to be a contributing member of their community.

"Sunrise Way showed me I could live a life without drugs and alcohol and actually enjoy being part of society instead of fighting against it," Dan said.

Support continues after exiting the program with a continuing care counsellor providing ongoing counselling along with assisting discharged participants to gain meaningful employment, find stable housing, navigate government agencies, and organise suitable therapeutic and social services.

Sunrise Way also ensures people who have exited the program have the ability to engage with the continuing care counsellor for as long as required, with support focused on individual need.

Sunrise Way is available for any individual over the age of 18 who is ready to make a change in their lives and take steps to achieve their goals.

Our 2018/19

residential providers:

- Sunrise Way
- Teen Challenge Queensland

Our year in numbers:



551 referrals received



128 clients accepted into service



32 graduations



Steve is passionate about making a difference for people living with chronic conditions in the Ipswich and Somerset regions.

Advancing the health and wellbeing

of our population

Improving outcomes for people with Chronic Conditions

Our PHN is working with primary health care providers to support people who are living with chronic conditions.

This year, we realigned our chronic conditions programs to the National Strategic Framework for Chronic Conditions. Following extensive consultation, new chronic conditions services funded by our PHN focus on providing early intervention, prevention and care coordination support for people living with eligible chronic conditions and/or risk factors.

One provider that is making a difference for people living with chronic conditions in the region is exercise physiologist, Steve Royle, who works to empower his clients to make healthier lifestyle choices.

The Healthy Eating, Activity, Lifestyle (HEAL) program is licensed and used by Exercise and Sport Science Australia and works to put clients in the driver's seat so they can take control of their health.

Steve delivers the eight-week program in the Ipswich and Somerset regions to assist people living with chronic conditions such as type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

HEAL has a no-diet philosophy and focuses on what clients can do as opposed to what they can't do.

"This program is important to me in my community of Ipswich and Somerset because with more of a client-centered approach we can change behaviour and start to action and bring about a positive outcome for people," Steve said.

One participant taking steps to improve her health is *Jan, who when starting the program, was unable to complete six minutes of walking for the first measurement test.

After attending every session, being conscious of improving her food intake and taking part in the various exercise activities that she could do, Jan was able to complete the six minutes of walking at her last session and proceeded to walk an extra 89 metres unassisted. This was an incredible feat for Jan and as a result of the program, her balance has vastly improved, and her upper and lower body strength have increased.

"By focusing on your physical health these are some of the benefits that can happen naturally," Steve said.

*Name has been changed to maintain privacy

PHN Program Officer Francene Bain is pictured with Eugenie Corbett and Graham Barron from Toowoomba Hospice.



Quality care at the end of life

Lover of writing, gardening and her garden club. That's how Wendy, who spent her final days at Ipswich Hospice, wanted to be remembered.

Wendy first visited Ipswich Hospice to see what her end of life care options might look like after her principal diagnosis of breast cancer had progressed.

Wendy was initially admitted to the Palliative Care Unit at Ipswich Hospital after the cancer had metastasised. Following family discussions at the Palliative Care Unit with Wendy and her husband and two of her three daughters, the family made the decision for Wendy to be transferred to Ipswich Hospice.

Wendy was admitted to the hospice on 30 January 2019. Wendy was a guest at the hospice for 26 days. Following her death, the hospice team successfully coordinated with the Queensland Tissue Bank for the retrieval of eye tissue as per her wish to be an organ/tissue donor.

Our PHN funds both Ipswich Hospice and Toowoomba Hospice to improve the quality of life for local residents with life-limiting illnesses.

These community-funded holistic hospices are two of only a few services available that provide no-cost end of life care in Toowoomba and Ipswich and the broader Darling Downs and West Moreton region.

Funding supplied by our PHN supports the employment of suitably qualified staff, including a registered nurse and personal care worker, to give high quality clinical care and support to patients and their families.

“We are all very grateful that Wendy was able to spend her last few weeks in such a loving and caring environment. We would like to thank all the nursing staff and volunteers who showed so much love and care for Wendy. I do not know the names of all these people, but we could see how much they really cared for Wendy and for all her family.

Thank you to you all for making Wendy's last few weeks as comfortable and pain free as you could. It was such a lovely environment in which to spend her last weeks.”
Wendy's Family.

Earlier this year, Toowoomba Hospice provided end of life care to a couple who had been together for more than 40 years.

“We recently had the privilege of caring for a couple who had been together for more than 40 years, who were both terminal, diagnosed independently. Both partners were very concerned about the other's journey.

“The female partner was admitted first and then later her partner. The staff enabled them to spend their last moments together in each other's arms.

“Our Pastoral Care team were also able to perform a small memorial ceremony for the family for the first partner who passed away, to enable the remaining partner to bravely attend, even though it was physically very challenging. It was a very sacred precious event, and I feel honoured we were able to provide opportunity for this.” Toowoomba Hospice.

Without the Ipswich and Toowoomba Hospice, these patients and their families would have no other means of funding this care at the most vulnerable time in their life.

Our providers from January – June 2019:

- Abel Podiatry
- AH Diabetes
- Better Movement Clinic
- Burnett Allied Care
- Darling Downs Health
- EACH
- Fresh Start Professional Healthcare
- Friendly Feet Podiatry
- Healthy Lifestyles Australia
- Inglewood Community Welfare Group
- Integrated Therapy Solutions
- Macintyre Health – World Class Diabetes
- Margot Hawker Dietetics
- Rapid Exercise Physiologist Specialists
- South Burnett Physiotherapy
- South Burnett Podiatry
- Steve Royle Exercise Physiotherapy Group
- Toowoomba Podiatry Clinic
- Total Balance Health and Fitness
- Total Health Podiatry
- Vincent Young Podiatrist
- Vital Health
- Warwick Physioworks

From January – June 2019:

- 5517 individual occasions of service, averaging 920 per month
- 360 group sessions held, averaging 60 per month
- 98% of services were delivered face to face
- 383,235 client contact minutes
- 73% of referrals came from GPs
- The most common chronic condition for referral was diabetes (32%) followed by obesity (17%)
- 50% of clients were aged 65 and above
- 25% of clients living with 3 or more chronic conditions

Improving access in rural communities

Care coordination services funded by our PHN are accelerating access to medical appointments for older people living in Goondiwindi.

Through the Goondiwindi Meditrans service, Goondiwindi Regional Council, in partnership with Darling Downs Health and Tait Auto Group, provides volunteer drivers for people in the community who have trouble getting to medical appointments in Toowoomba.

Sue Salisbury co-ordinates the Goondiwindi Meditrans service and emphasised how important the service was for the town.

“Accessibility to medical services is really important in a regional area such as ours – especially when patients become too unwell to drive or do not have family available to take them to appointments in other centres,” Sue said.

“Patient feedback has been so positive about the service, with many choosing to utilise the service numerous times.”

Working hand in hand with the Meditrans services, people needing access to local appointments are supported by Care Goondiwindi who coordinate trips for patients within town through the Medico service.

*Joy is a long-term user of the Medico service. At 95, Joy still lives in her own home and utilises the Medico service for all her medical appointments as her family all work & are unable to take her. In one month alone, Joy sometimes accesses the service on up to 10 occasions to transport her to her local GP, the optometrist and physiotherapist.

Joy uses a walker and has hearing and vision problems. She quite often comments how much she appreciates the assistance not only of the service but of the drivers, who are helpful and patient with her. The service also cuts down her monthly costs considerably – accessing a taxi (return trip) would easily cost \$15 per appointment, which over a one-month period, is significant for someone on an aged pension.

*Name has been changed to maintain privacy

*Ann is a single mum of two young boys aged 6 and 8 – the youngest of which has a disability which requires regular appointments to both occupation therapists and speech therapists.

Ann and her family were temporarily living in Goondiwindi and their only transport was taxis which can be expensive if used on a regular basis.

Care Goondiwindi’s Medico was able to assist Ann to attend the required appointments for her son. At each pick up Ann expressed how appreciative she was that the service existed so her son could get the support he needed.



Care Goondiwindi coordinated **1,688 patient trips** within Goondiwindi



Meditrans coordinated approximately **450 trips for residents** to access services in Toowoomba



Making an impact for our refugees

Imagine arriving in a new country, with little to no paperwork about your previous health care and limited ability to speak the local language. This can often be the reality for newly arrived refugees to Australia.

Enter the Refugee Nurse Outreach Program. The program is funded by our PHN and is delivered across the region by Access Community Services Limited (ACSL) and Multicultural Development Australia (MDA) to support newly arrived refugees access the health care system.

Vanessa Aldridge is a Refugee Health Nurse based in Goodna who works to coordinate recently arrived refugees into the health system and support them to access health care.

“When a refugee first arrives, I meet with them to do an intake assessment and gather information so that they can be linked with a GP as close as possible to where they are living,” Vanessa said.

“We then work closely with the general practice to ensure they are refugee ready and culturally safe to provide the appropriate health care.

“We will then also look at making appropriate referrals to additional service such as the dentist, and child health and mental health services. We then follow up with a meeting every three months to assess how they are going and how independent they are.

“Along the way, I will also provide additional education around things like accessing emergency services and how to make appointments with their GP.”

Something that can make these tasks more difficult, is lack of previous health care documentation.

“Sometimes we get refugees who come from a medical background who are really confident accessing health, and others have never seen a doctor in their life and have only had one immunisation, so another thing we do is track their immunisations to date and their future ones,” Vanessa said.

In collaboration with ACSL and MDA, the Refugee Nurse Outreach program is made possible through close collaboration between our PHN, Metro South Health, TRAMS (Catholic Care), Mercy Community, Mater Hospital, GPs and allied health providers.

At any one time, Vanessa can be assisting up to over 100 refugees, and the greatest reward - seeing the broader impact of the program for the refugee community.

“It’s when I see those clients who have gone through the program and I see them teaching these skills to their own friends and supporting their own community and being able to support other people when they move to the same area, they are really doing their job for us.”



Our region is home to more than **10,000 people from migrant and refugee backgrounds and diverse cultures**



This year:



Care was coordinated for **915** newly arrived refugees



14 health literacy workshops were held



500 interpreting services were provided.

The Interpreting for Allied Health Program provides translation services for allied health professionals treating patients from refugee and multicultural backgrounds across our region.

The interpreting services are delivered by Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) National.

David's Story

*David is a 14-year-old boy from Iraq that was settled in Toowoomba in September 2018 with his parents and three siblings. Before arriving in Australia, he spent time in a refugee camp. When he arrived, he only spoke Kurdish Kumanji.

David was born with a rare and complicated congenital heart defect known as Tetralogy of Fallot (TOF) which results in poor blood flow throughout the body. Typically, children undergo open heart surgery in their first year of life to treat the condition. David has not had any surgical intervention for his condition, possibly due to poor access to health care in Iraq throughout his childhood.

When David first arrived in Australia, it was identified immediately that he would have complex healthcare needs and he was linked in with a GP for immediate assessment. Pathology and radiology were ordered, and a referral was sent to Queensland Children's Hospital Cardiac Clinic.

Once an appointment was received from Queensland Children's Hospital, David was required to have a spinal x-ray and an echocardiogram completed. These were also reviewed by his GP and further pathology was required along with appointments with a specialist.

David's family was linked to the NDIS to assess eligibility for further support.

David's parents are receiving support for themselves and their other son who has a severe cognitive impairment. The strain of this on David's parents, in addition to the stress involved with relocating the family alongside the language barrier, puts them at a high level of risk for carer fatigue.

Much of the additional work that has been required to help establish this family has been the responsibility of one of MDA's Refugee Health Officers under the Refugee Nurse Outreach Program. Without this extra support the strain on the family unit would likely have increased exponentially.

*Name has been changed to maintain privacy

Child and Youth

Changing lives, one conversation at a time

How much of an impact can one or a series of conversations have? Ask the youth who engage with Civic Assist's Street Crews and it would be fair to say that a conversation can be life changing.

The Civic Assist Street Crews operate in Toowoomba's CBD from 6pm to late on Thursday nights with the aim of meeting vulnerable youth aged 12 to 24 in a place they feel comfortable. Youth engaged by the Street Crews are often seeking support on a range of topics that impact their health and wellbeing, including:

- homelessness
- relationship conflict
- family violence
- medical care
- access to transport
- school and/or education
- alcohol and other drug dependence

Over the past 12 months, the Street Crews have engaged in over 1000 meaningful conversations with youth.

One young person engaged with the Street Crews over 15 times during the 2018/19 year. The team was able to support this young person by listening to their challenging life journey and providing a safe environment to speak about appropriate support networks. They were also able to speak with the young person about areas such as lack of family support, eating disorders, alcohol and other drug misuse, harm minimisation, physical health concerns and anxiety around medical procedures.

In addition, the health professional was also able to speak with the young person about sexual health and consent for sexual relationships. The health professional spoke about values placed on relationships and self. The young person reported feeling more confident in acting on these values and engaging in safe sexual practice once the discussion had ended. The team and health professional encouraged the young person to visit a GP to speak further about any health concerns. In following up with the young person, they have since felt confident to speak with their GP and have followed up on some of the medical concerns they had.

1079 young people assisted

51% identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

16% were from culturally and linguistically diverse



The Civic Assist Street Crews assisted over 1,000 young people in 2018/2019.

Increasing GP confidence in kids' behaviour management

Earlier this year, our PHN put a call out for GP wanting to complete a GP Clinical Placement focused on behavioural management for children with the Paediatric Specialist Team at West Moreton Health.

The 12-week placements aim to improve GPs confidence in managing paediatric developmental behaviour disorders, including increasing confidence in managing medications, and building better understanding of interventions which stimulate positive behaviour development.

Dr Rida Khan, who owns Lockyer Valley Medical Centre was quick to take advantage of the opportunity.

"I spent my placement with Dr Ian Shellshear at the Plaza. It was very informative - I have really learnt how to approach patients with behavioural conditions, something I wasn't very comfortable with before. And it has been amazing seeing the management process, the resources available through school and community groups, and to also learn more about the pharmacological management options as well. I am already applying these learnings in my practice and hope to be able to continue to do so in the coming weeks and months."

True Relationships and Reproductive Health

This year, we supported True to support the reproductive and sexual health of young people under the age of 25 in Toowoomba and Ipswich through clinical services and information and education. The Toowoomba service ran for the full financial year, with the Ipswich service commencing in March 2019.

This year, True supported:

- 453 young people in Toowoomba
- through 707 appointments
- 84 young people in Ipswich
- through 91 appointments

Our Governance

Our PHN is governed by our Board of Directors, Clinical Councils and Community Advisory Committees. This is to ensure we fund health care solutions that provide the best value for money.

Our Board

We are led by a highly qualified Board who have a wealth of knowledge with demonstrated hands-on experience working within our region.



John Minz
Chair



Dr Patricia Stuart
Deputy Chair



Annette Scott
Executive Director Allied Health
for Darling Downs Health



Dr Andy Mellis
General Practitioner



Dr Graham McAllister
Medical Superintendent and
General Practitioner



Dr Tony Bayliss
General Practitioner



John Williams
Managing Director of Strattix



David Cosgrave
Lawyer



Kevin Rose
Barrister

Our Clinical Councils

Our Clinical Councils provide the Board with clinical recommendations and advice on the unique health needs of communities in regional, rural and remote areas. This helps us to make the best possible decisions when funding programs and services.

Darling Downs Clinical Council

- Dr Andy Mellis – General Practitioner (Chair from 1.11.18)
- Dr Colin Owen – General Practitioner (DD Chair till 31.10.18)
- Alicia Edwards – Physiotherapist
- Barry Sheehan – Psychologist
- Dr Hume Rendle-Short – General Practitioner (till 31.12.18)
- Dr Kevin Lynch – General Practitioner
- Lainie Nicholson – Psychologist (till 31.3.19)
- Melissa Sankey – Clinical Nurse Community Health/Dementia Advisor
- Dr Pat Stuart – General Practitioner
- Paige Skinner – Pharmacist
- Dr Penny Hutchinson – Public Health Physician and Director
- Rica Lacey – Director Indigenous Health Darling Downs Health
- Dr Theresa Johnson – GP Liaison Officer

West Moreton Clinical Council

- Dr Antony Bayliss – General Practitioner (Chair)
- Dr Brendan Thompson – General Practitioner (till 30.9.18)
- Cameron Foote – Pharmacist
- Cassandra Tratt – Indigenous Hospital Liaison West Moreton Health
- Prof Geoff Mitchell – Professor of General Practice and Palliative Care
- Georgia Ash – Psychologist
- MaryEllen Muller – Registered Nurse
- Dr Tanusha Ramaloo – GP Liaison Officer

Our Community Advisory Committees

Our Community Advisory Committees provide the Board with local and relevant perspectives on health issues from a community and consumer perspective.

We have two Community Advisory Committees representing our communities:

Darling Downs

- Dr Graham McAllister – Chair
- Bree Sauer
- Charlie Rowe
- Jim Madden
- Louisa Handyside
- Louise Judge
- Cr Neil Meiklejohn
- Rochelle Jesser

West Moreton

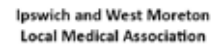
- Linda Patat – Chair (till 31.10.18)
- Kevin Rose – Chair (from 1.11.18)
- Brenda Moloney
- Helen Mees
- Kim Stanton
- Olivia McMahon
- Peter Tully
- Uncle Milton Walit
- Samantha Caves
- Megan Collis
- Colin McNamara

Our Members

Our PHN was originally formed in 2015 under a partnership between Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service and GP Connections.

To support primary health service integration, foundational changes to the organisation's structure were undertaken in 2017 with additional organisations approved for membership.

Current Organisational Members include:



Membership is open to all primary health organisations who live and work in the Darling Downs and West Moreton region.

Remuneration & Governance Committee

The Remuneration, Executive Management and Governance Sub-Committee provides the Board of our PHN with active involvement, guidance and advice on:

- CEO and executive recruitment
- CEO performance management
- succession planning
- remuneration for the Board, committees, councils and executive (including the CEO when required)
- strategic human resource governance, including remuneration, recruitment and performance frameworks.

Compliance Audit & Risk Management Committee

Our Compliance, Audit and Risk Management (CARM) Committee reports directly to the Board and provides oversight, independent assurance and assistance around company risk, control and compliance frameworks.



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