Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN

Annual Report 25-26



CONNECTING CARE

CREATING IMPACT

phn
DARLING DOWNS AND WEST MORETON
An Australian Government Initiative

Darling Downs and West Moreton Primary Health Network

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Australian Government

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Acknowledgement of Country

Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Custodians of this land on which we work. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging, and commit to a future with reconciliation and renewal at its heart.

We recognise that the concepts of land, family and spirituality are directly linked to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' physical, mental, social, spiritual and cultural wellbeing.

The PHN also acknowledges the resilience and wisdom of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as some of the world's longest lasting cultures, and recognise our responsibility to contribute towards a more equitable and culturally-safe primary care system.

- Barunggam
- Bigambul
- Giabal
- Iman (Yiman)
- Jagera
- Jarowair
- Kamilaroi
- Keinjan
- Ugarapul
- Wakka Wakka
- Yuggera

The PHN refers to the AIATSIS Map of Indigenous Australia when acknowledging Traditional Owner groups. The Annual Report can be translated into alternative languages by calling the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS) on 13 14 50.

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Message from the CEO

At the heart of everything we do is a simple belief: better health outcomes happen when people, services and communities are connected. This year's theme, 'Connecting care, creating impact,' reflects our commitment to strengthening those connections across the Darling Downs and West Moreton region and delivering meaningful solutions that improve the health and wellbeing of our communities.

Together, we have remained focused on what matters most: strengthening primary healthcare for those who need it most and ensuring our communities can access the right care, at the right time, closer to home.

This year has demonstrated the power of collaboration across our diverse communities. Through strong partnerships, innovative programs and a shared commitment to improving health outcomes, we have continued to address local health priorities, expand access to care and support more integrated, person-centred services.

While challenges across the healthcare sector remain significant, our collective determination has enabled us to deliver meaningful outcomes for our region.

Engagement with healthcare providers remains central to our work, and our Health Professional Meet and Greets continue to be a key platform for listening, learning and collaborating. This year we connected with more than 260 GPs, nurses, allied health professionals and practice staff from across the region, gaining valuable local insights and ensuring our work remains responsive to the needs of healthcare providers and the communities we serve.

We continued to strengthen access to mental health care across the region. The opening of Wattle House Toowoomba in April 2026 marked an important milestone, providing people with free, person-centred mental health and wellbeing support in a safe and welcoming environment.

This was followed by the opening of our third Medicare Mental Health Centre in Warwick, alongside existing centres in Ipswich and Kingaroy, further strengthening access to integrated mental health, alcohol and other drug support across the region. Together, these services provide a welcoming and accessible pathway to care for individuals, families and carers.

In June 2026, we were joined by Corinne Mulholland, Senator for Queensland and the team at Drayton Medical Centre, to officially open the Toowoomba Endometriosis and Pelvic Pain Clinic. Commissioned by the PHN, this clinic is part of the Australian Government's expansion of endometriosis and pelvic pain clinics nationwide, increasing the total number of clinics to 33, with at least one in each PHN region.

We also continued to enhance care for people living with chronic conditions through 13 GP-led multidisciplinary team clinics, strengthening coordinated, patient-centred care and improving access to local support across the region.

These highlights reflect the power of collaboration and the collective commitment of our staff, stakeholders, local workforce and cross-sector partners to improving health outcomes across our region. I would like to extend my heartfelt thanks to our Board of Directors, as well as the Clinical Council and Community Advisory Committees, for their guidance, expertise and steadfast support throughout the year.

Finally, to the staff of our PHN—thank you. Your collaboration, resilience and passion for making a difference are at the heart of our success. Together, we are delivering meaningful outcomes today while building a stronger, healthier and more connected future for our communities.

Lucille Chalmers
Chief Executive Officer



Message from the Chair

I am pleased to present the 2025-2026 Annual Report on behalf of Darling Downs and West Moreton.

This year has been one of continued progress, collaboration and innovation as we worked alongside our partners to strengthen primary healthcare and improve health outcomes across our region.

Through an investment of $68 million into the local health system this year, we supported initiatives that improve access to care, strengthen service integration and respond to the evolving needs of our communities.

In a rapidly changing healthcare environment, our focus remains clear: ensuring people can access the right care, at the right time, in the right place.

The Darling Downs and West Moreton region is incredibly diverse. Covering an area roughly the size of South Korea and home to a population equivalent to that of Luxembourg, our region spans vibrant urban centres, rural communities and some of Queensland's most remote locations.

This diversity brings both opportunities and challenges, reinforcing the importance of a health system that is responsive, connected and designed around the needs of local communities. This year's theme, 'Connecting care, creating impact,' reflects our commitment to delivering solutions that are shaped by and for our communities. It encapsulates our approach to understanding local challenges, leveraging local strengths, and investing purposefully to improve health outcomes where they are needed most.

Throughout 2025-26, Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN continued to play an important role as a connector, commissioner, and enabler within the healthcare system. We strengthened relationships across primary care, hospitals, community services, and government agencies to drive more integrated and coordinated care for our communities.

Mental health remained a key priority, with continued investment in locally designed and delivered services that improve access, strengthen pathways of care, and support people closer to home. We also maintained our focus on addressing health inequities and supporting vulnerable populations, ensuring our investments deliver meaningful impact for those who need them most.

Dr Tony Bayliss
Board Chair

About the PHN

Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN is one of 31 Primary Health Networks across Australia.

Our role in the health system is to strengthen primary healthcare—the initial care people seek in their communities from GPs, pharmacies and allied health professionals—and to collaborate with our partners to ensure appropriate care for those in greatest need.

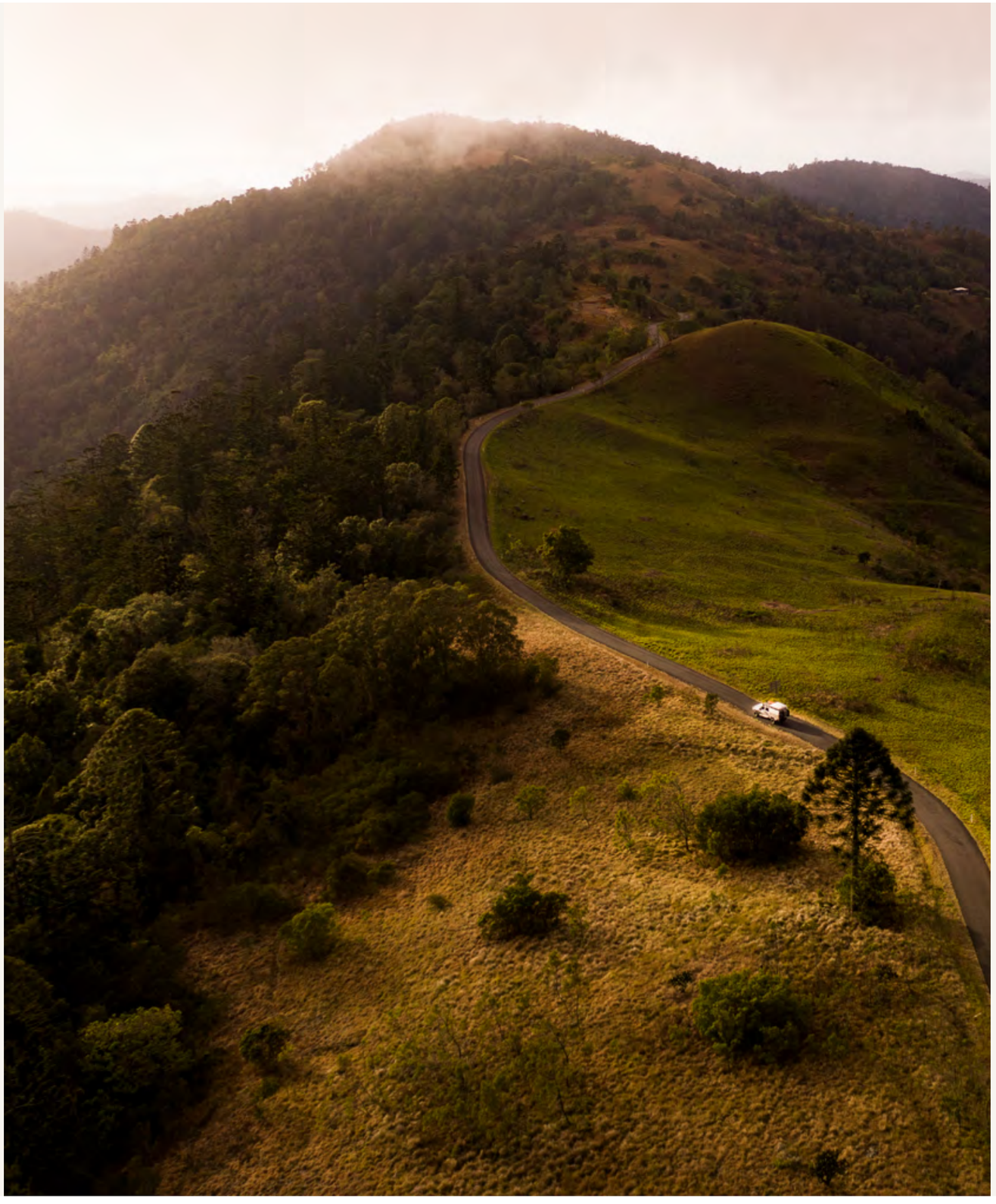
As a not-for-profit organisation primarily funded by the Australian Government, we commission services, build sector capability and foster collaboration to improve access, equity and health outcomes for people across the Darling Downs and West Moreton region.

Our vision

Healthy communities experiencing excellent healthcare, closer to home

Our purpose

To work with our partners to strengthen primary healthcare for those who need it most



663,474

estimated total population of people in our region

176

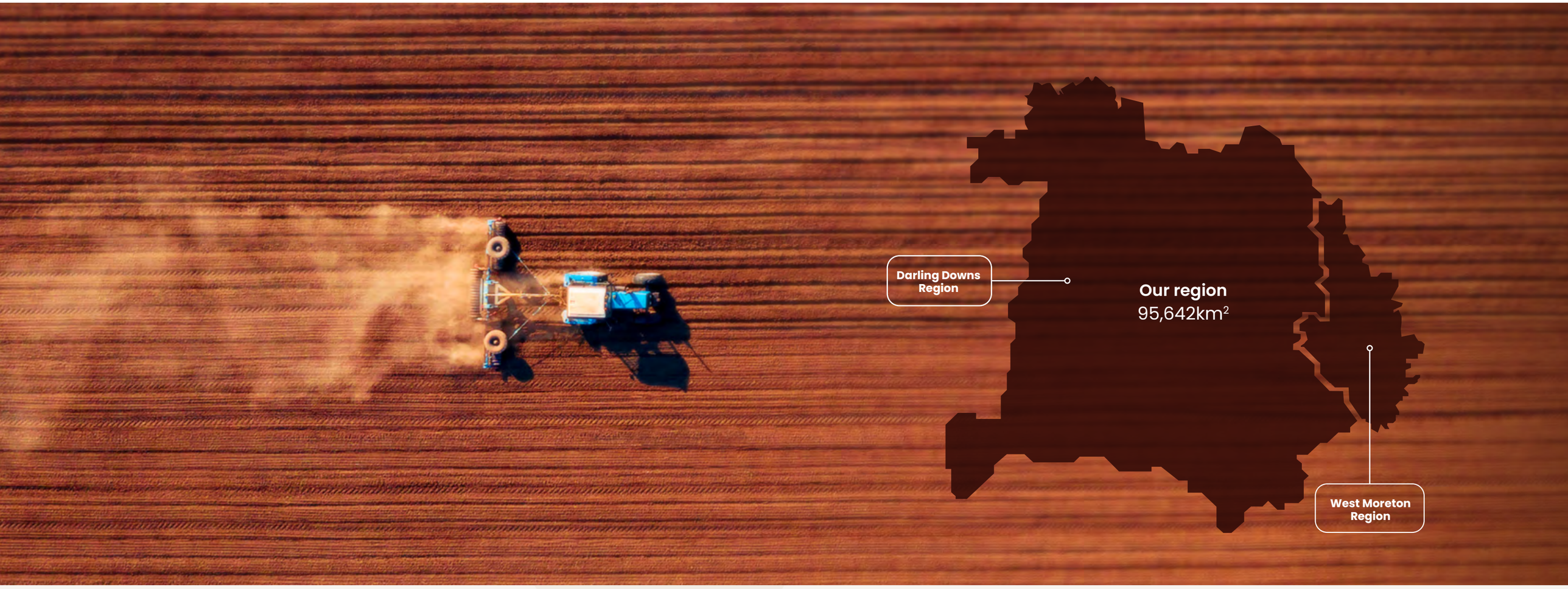
practices in our region supported by the PHN

6.5%

of people in our region identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

4

strategic priorities: healthy organisation, healthy communities, healthy primary, and healthy partnerships



Knowing our region

Spanning over 95,642km², our PHN supports communities across 12 local government areas (LGA), from Ipswich and Toowoomba to the Lockyer Valley, Scenic Rim, Somerset, South Burnett, Cherbourg, Southern Downs, Goondiwindi and Western Downs. Our region also extends into parts of the Banana Shire and Brisbane local government areas.

We are located outside the capital city and we support healthcare in urban, regional, rural and remote settings, all with their unique challenges.

We share our region with two state Hospital and Health Services—Darling Downs Health and West Moreton Health—and we work closely with them to ensure our approach to healthcare is aligned.

We also work collaboratively with general practices, community pharmacies, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, allied health and community leaders to improve the coordination of care, helping people receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

663,474
estimated total population of people in our region

3
Medicare Mental Health Centres

3
Medicare Urgent Care Clinics

59
RACH places per 1,000

100.2
general medical practitioners per 100,000 people

38
median age compared to QLD: 38.5 AUS: 38.4

Strategic performance

From strategy to action

Our focus remains steadfast on achieving our ‘one perfect day’ vision, where everyone in our region can live healthier lives, supported by a connected, equitable and thriving local health system. Throughout the year, we continued to translate our Strategic Plan 2023-2027 into meaningful action, ensuring our priorities were reflected in the programs, partnerships and initiatives delivered across the Darling Downs and West Moreton region.



The four pillars

Our strategy is guided by four strategic quadrants: Healthy organisation, Healthy communities, Healthy primary care and Healthy partnerships. Together, these priorities provide a clear framework for decision-making, investment and service planning, ensuring our efforts remain aligned to the needs of our communities and the broader health system now and into the future.

Creating lasting impact

We remain responsive and adaptable in a changing healthcare environment, guided by a ‘stories and numbers’ approach. By bringing together the voices of our communities, partners and stakeholders with robust health data and intelligence, we ensure our work remains responsive and focused on delivering meaningful and lasting impact for the communities we serve.

Read our Strategic Plan at: *ddwmphn.com.au/StrategicPlan*

Strategic Priorities	Purpose	Progress
Healthy organisation	Consolidating the PHN’s role as regional leaders in commissioning.	• Establishment of CAPaPLE learning and development system. • Transformative approaches to commissioning, particularly the Integrated Mental Health Hubs model. • Introduction of new internal commissioning platform.
Healthy communities	Healthy start to life.	• Early Years and Young Persons’ Health Strategy 2025-2028 published in November 2025.
	Healthy minds.	• Finalisation of 2023-2027 Healthy Minds Healthy Lives strategy. Research and consultation commenced for new strategy.
	Increased health equity.	• Establishment of Wattle House in Toowoomba. • Working with locals in Western Downs and Goondiwindi to design integrated mental health hubs.
Healthy primary care	High-quality, innovative primary care.	• Supported workforce with national reform changes. • Establishment of Toowoomba Endometriosis and Pelvic Pain clinic, along with other multidisciplinary teams sites. • Primary Sense transition. • Embedding and maturation of Indigenous Wellness Connect.
Healthy partnerships	A one system mindset and connected consumer journeys.	• Regional Health Collaborative working collectively on priority strategic initiatives.



Empowering staff within a capable and **impactful organisation.**

Healthy organisation



A healthy and thriving organisation

Our people are the heart of the PHN. This year, we continued to invest in building a workplace where our staff feel valued, supported and empowered to deliver meaningful outcomes for the communities we serve. Guided by our values of inclusion, insight, innovation and integrity, we foster a culture that encourages learning, strengthens connections and supports our people to contribute their best.

Alongside a broad range of professional development, wellbeing and workforce initiatives, these efforts are helping to strengthen a connected, capable and resilient workforce, supporting our people to deliver on the PHN's strategic priorities and create a lasting, meaningful and positive impact across our region.

Our people at a glance

71
staff members

57 full-time staff
14 part-time staff

88%
agree the PHN is truly a great place to work

74%
staff engagement score (up 3% from last year)

Our values

Inclusion
We listen to and learn from the diverse voices of people who access and deliver healthcare in our region.

Innovation
We explore, develop and champion new ideas that improve the way our health system works.

Integrity
We do what we say, and we say what we do.

Insight
We transform stories and numbers into meaningful action.



PHN's Michelle Canning and Ruqaiyah Buksh at the PHN Staff Day - Ipswich, Queensland

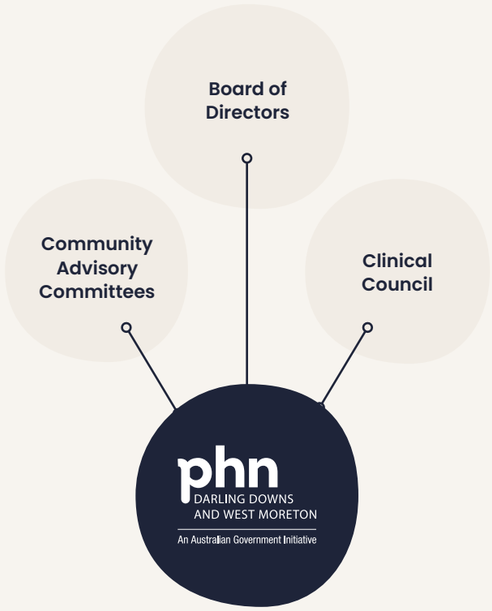
Governance

Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN is underpinned by a robust governance system that ensures our work is accountable, strategic, and aligned with the needs of our communities.

As a primary health organisation funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing we are responsible for understanding and responding to local health priorities in line with national policy, program guidelines, and the Primary Health Networks Performance and Quality Framework.

Our governance structure includes a skills-based Board of Directors, supported by the Clinical Council and Community Advisory Committees. These bodies bring together deep local knowledge, clinical expertise, and diverse lived experiences to shape our direction and inform our decisions.

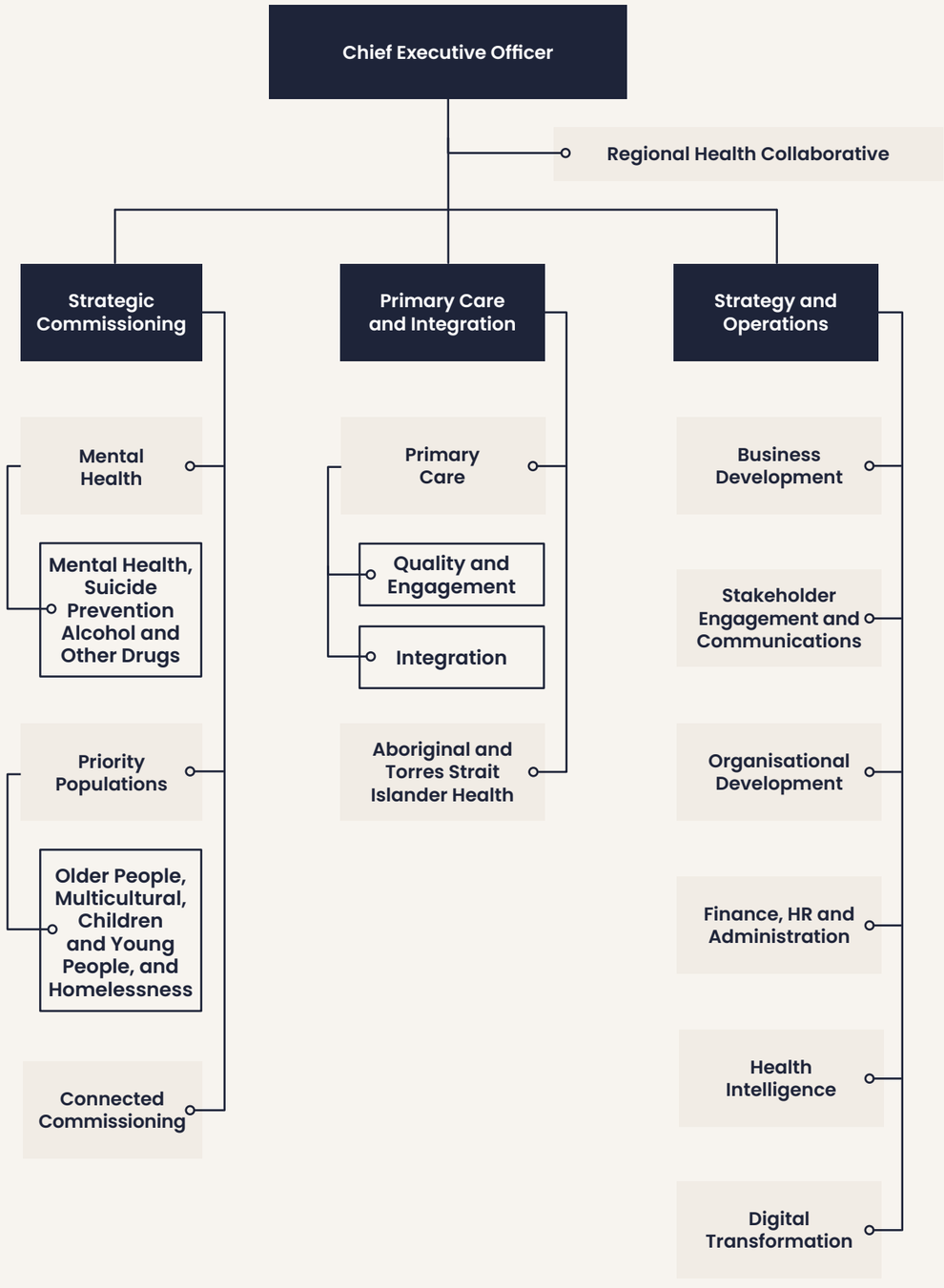
Governance structure



This strong governance foundation enables us to:

- Align investment and commissioning decisions
- Engage meaningfully with stakeholders
- Ensure accountability and transparency in measuring outcomes
- Foster cross-sector collaboration

Organisational structure



Board of Directors

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



Dr Tony Bayliss
General Practitioner

Dr Tony Bayliss has practised as a GP in Ipswich since 2012 and opened his own practice in 2015. He has served on the Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN Board since November 2017 and as Chair since 2019. In 2024, he became Chair of the PHN Co-operative. Tony brings practical experience in clinical matters, governance, finance and strategy, and remains committed to improving community health. He is an active member of the RACGP and West Moreton Local Medical Association.



Megan O'Shannessy
Chief Executive Officer - Rural Medical Education Australia

Megan O'Shannessy is CEO of Rural Medical Education Australia, delivering the Griffith University Rural Medical Program across the Darling Downs and Maranoa. A Registered Nurse and Midwife, she brings extensive rural health leadership and clinical expertise. Megan serves on the Medical Board of Australia Queensland Board and is President of Protea Place. She holds a Master of Public Health, Bachelor of Nursing, and is a Graduate of the Australian Institute of Company Directors.



Deanne Minniecon
National Manager of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Engagement at Diabetes Australia

Deanne Minniecon is an Aboriginal (Goreng Goreng) and Torres Strait Islander (Erub) woman with 30 years' experience working in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and education. Deanne holds a Master of Health Science (Health Promotion) and is an Adjunct Professor in the Faculty of Health, School of Exercise and Nutrition Sciences at Queensland University of Technology. Deanne is also on the Board of West Moreton Hospital and Health Service.



Professor Lauren Ball
Professor of Community Health and Wellbeing at the University of Queensland

Professor Lauren Ball is a Professor of Community Health and Wellbeing at the University of Queensland. Lauren brings more than 15 years' experience as a clinician and researcher in primary care as a qualified dietitian, exercise physiologist and primary healthcare researcher. Beyond this, Lauren is a thought leader and strategist who is actively influencing positive change across all levels of the health system.



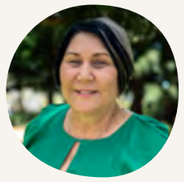
Dr Rachael Gray General Practitioner

Dr Rachael Gray is a GP with over 27 years' experience serving rural and regional communities including Northern NSW, Dirranbandi, Roma and Toowoomba. She contributes clinical, business and governance expertise to the PHN Board, committed to building healthier communities through sustainable primary care. Rachael owns a 14-GP practice in Toowoomba, bringing strong leadership and advocacy for accessible, quality healthcare.



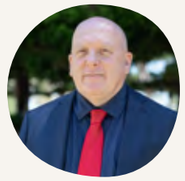
Dr Vladislav Matic
General Practitioner

Dr Vladislav (Vlad) Matic is a GP with more than 25 years of remote, rural, regional, and urban general practice experience. Vlad is passionate about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, chronic and complex disease management, data, and clinical governance. In addition to contributing to GP and primary care Boards over the past 20 years, Vlad has also been very involved in the teaching of medical students and GP Registrars.



Cheryl Dalton
Chief Executive Officer - SBcare

Cheryl Dalton is the CEO of SBcare, a "Profit for Purpose" aged and disability care organisation serving the Darling Downs and South Burnett. She brings extensive agribusiness, not-for-profit and government Board experience, with strong governance and strategic expertise. A former Darling Downs Hospital and Health Board member, she also served 16 years as South Burnett Regional Councillor.



David Cosgrave
Lawyer

David Cosgrave is a Toowoomba-based lawyer with Australian and international experience in law, business and management. His executive and Board roles span investment banking, healthcare, education, technology and security. He has worked with Northern Sydney Area Health Service, Crosby Asset Management, CSIRO, the University of Southern Queensland and his own businesses. David joined the PHN Board in 2018, bringing governance, risk and strategy expertise.



Rica Lacey
Chief Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Officer - Queensland Health

Rica is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health leader with 14 years' experience in community-controlled and government health services. She is Queensland Health's Chief Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Officer and a long-standing PHN Clinical Council representative. Rica has held senior Indigenous health leadership roles, including Director at Darling Downs Hospital and Health Service, where she strengthened service delivery, cultural capability, workforce development and community engagement. She is committed to advocacy, partnerships and empowering young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.



Elizabeth Adams
Chief Executive Officer - Goolburri Aboriginal Health

Elizabeth Adams, CEO of Goolburri Aboriginal Health, served on the PHN Board of Directors from October 2022 to October 2025.



PHN's Terence Dawson and Rebecca Cerqui at the West Moreton GP Symposium - Ipswich, Queensland

Looking after our people

We are proud to foster a workplace culture grounded in diversity, inclusion and community connection.

Many of our staff live in our region, strengthening our local ties and understanding of the communities we serve. The breadth of backgrounds, experiences and perspectives across our team strengthens collaboration, innovation and our ability to deliver meaningful outcomes.

Employee feedback continues to reflect a highly engaged workforce, with staff highlighting strong trust in leadership, a positive and inclusive workplace culture, and a strong sense of connection to the organisation and its purpose.

We actively support employee participation through organisational working groups, staff development initiatives and regular opportunities to provide feedback and help shape our future direction. Staff contributions are recognised and celebrated through initiatives including our Quarterly Staff Awards and Length of Service Awards.

Organisational development

Building a capable, connected and future-ready workforce.

This year, we continued to strengthen our strategic approach to organisational development, embedding a capability-led model designed to connect individual growth with organisational priorities.

Led by our Director of Organisational Development, this work has focused on creating a more integrated approach to capability, performance development and learning across the PHN.

Professional development opportunities are now mapped to PHN capabilities through CAPaBLE – our new capability, performance and learning platform.

The CAPaBLE platform supports employees to build capability through a clear and structured approach to reflecting on strengths, identifying development opportunities, and connecting organisational priorities with individual workplans and ongoing performance conversations.

The PHN has taken a more integrated approach to organisational development, helping align individual growth, workforce capability and strategic objectives.

These initiatives reflect our ongoing commitment to building a capable, connected and future-ready workforce.

Through a strategic, capability-led approach to development, we are strengthening the skills, leadership and organisational capability needed to respond to evolving community needs and deliver sustainable health outcomes across our region.

Employee impact

100%
of employees completed their organisational capability reflections

92%
say the capability and Work Plan approach gives greater clarity about accountability, success and development

82%
say capability reflection helped clarify their strengths and development priorities

73%
report a clear or very clear understanding of the capabilities expected in their role

Strategy
Operational priorities

Capability
What success requires

Performance and development
Goals, milestones and conversations

Learning and governance
Targeted development and oversight

Impact
Capability, leadership and results



Penelope Aiken presenting at the PHN Staff Day

“

CAPaBLE coaching has helped me clearly identify my core strengths and understand how to apply them effectively in my role. I’ve learnt strategies to adapt these strengths in different work contexts, which has improved my confidence and ability to tackle challenges.

— PHN staff member

I have a clearer understanding of expectations, stronger connection between my goals and the capabilities required for success, and greater confidence in my ability to achieve agreed goals.

— PHN staff member

Development conversations have helped create clearer priorities for my growth and a stronger understanding of what is expected in my role.

— PHN staff member

”

Reconciliation journey

Our vision for reconciliation is for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to have equal access to high-quality primary care and improved health and wellbeing. This year we worked towards finalising our Innovate RAP, which has guided our actions for the last three years. At its conclusion in October 2026, the PHN will transition to a 'Stretch' RAP, which will involve embedding reconciliation initiatives into our business strategies, so they become 'business as usual'.

As our understanding and meaningful engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities continues to strengthen, the Stretch RAP will support the PHN to further embed reconciliation across our organisation and strengthen our capacity to work with key health service delivery partners to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across our communities.

We put the building blocks in place for our Stretch RAP by strengthening relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander stakeholders through collaboration with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs), Kambu Health Members Elders group and regional partners, while advancing initiatives to support greater Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement and health equity.

79

RAP actions remained on track for completion by October, with significant progress made on the PHN's Innovate RAP in 2025–26.

Key actions completed this year include:

- Cultural awareness training for PHN staff and providers delivered by the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association.
- Developed and implemented a Cultural Protocol Policy for meetings, gatherings, and events.
- Established a cultural learning strategy and supporting resources.
- Development of an Equity Dashboard to support increased monitoring of First Nations engagement through our CRM.
- Staff celebrating NAIDOC and National Reconciliation Week, including internal events in both offices, and attendance at community events.



Read our RAP at:
ddwmphn.com.au/RAP



NAIDOC family and cultural celebration - Ipswich, Queensland

Celebrating culture

Celebrating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, strengthening connections with community and embedding cultural safety across our work remained an important focus for the PHN this year.

The PHN attended and hosted a stall at the Ipswich NAIDOC Family and Cultural Celebration to yarn with the community and local health organisations.

This year's National Reconciliation Week theme was 'All In for Reconciliation'. At the PHN, we reflected on our responsibility to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across all we do.

As part of our commitment to being all in for reconciliation, PHN staff undertook AIDA's cultural safety training, led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander doctors, to help strengthen the way we listen, learn and apply culturally safe practices in our everyday work.

The RAP Working Group also hosted a series of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander film screenings and community initiatives as part of the celebrations.



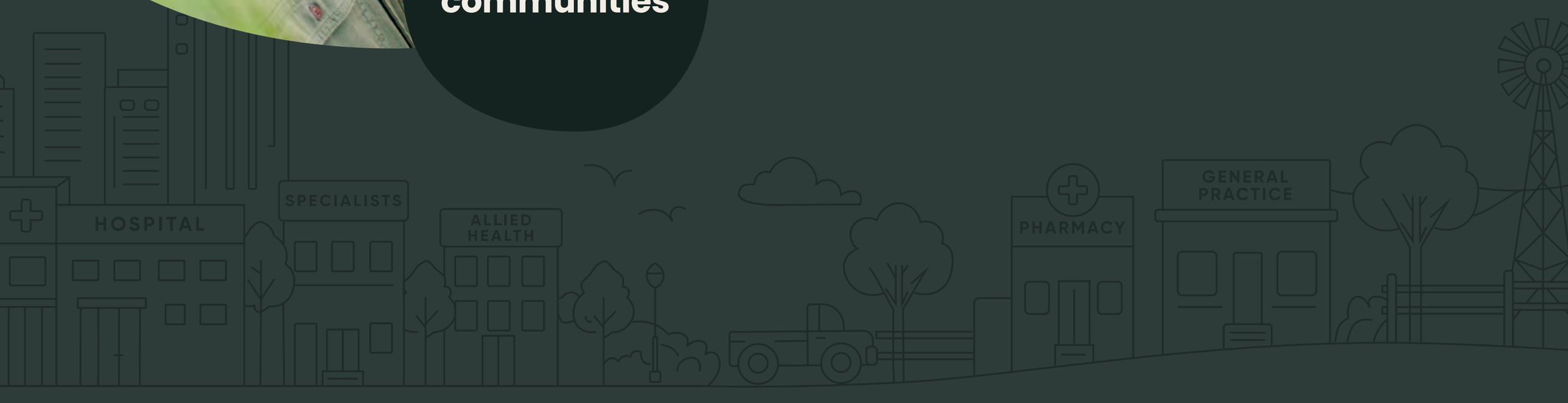


Anthony Kemp - Ipswich, Queensland



Healthy communities

Enabling **equitable health** and **wellbeing** across our lifespan.



Healthy communities

We work towards our vision of a healthier community with a lifespan approach:

- Mental health
- An overarching focus on equity and cultural safety
- Suicide prevention
- Chronic conditions prevention and care
- Alcohol and other drugs
- Multicultural and refugee health
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health
- Antenatal health and the early years through to older persons and palliative care

This work is guided by a clear vision for a connected, equitable and thriving local health system. While the challenges facing our region are diverse, they are deeply interconnected and require coordinated, place-based responses.

This year, continued population growth, increasing cultural diversity and the changing needs of an ageing population reinforced the importance of strong partnerships, integrated care and long-term planning.

These factors continue to shape how we invest, commission and support services to meet the current and future health needs of our communities.

971,000
expected population by 2046

38
years median age for our region
QLD: 38.5 AUS: 38.4

12
diverse Local Government Areas

Our strategic focus areas this year were:

- Improving early life experiences for mothers, families, and children
- Improving quality of life for older people, and addressing chronic condition risk factors
- Supporting mental wellbeing, reducing suicide risk and substance use
- Addressing inequities faced by priority populations



Equity and inclusion

Building a more equitable and inclusive health system remains a key priority for the PHN. Throughout 2025-26, we continued to engage with communities across our region to better understand local needs and ensure community voices informed the planning and delivery of health services.

Through initiatives such as our TALK ABOUT campaign and other targeted engagement activities, we worked alongside multicultural and refugee communities, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, people living with disability, and LGBTQIA+ communities to better understand their unique healthcare needs and challenges.

By offering information in accessible formats and embedding community voices in service planning, we aim to reduce barriers, address intersectional disadvantage and ensure that everyone in our region can access the care they need, in the way that works best for them.



46.1%
of households in our region are low income

7.4%
of people in our region have a profound or severe disability

42.7
per 10,000 people in our region are experiencing homelessness

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health



We continued to strengthen our efforts to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, guided by strategic investment, cultural safety, and meaningful partnerships that support sustainable, community-informed outcomes.

Key areas of focus included:

- Targeted commissioning and investment to address chronic disease, suicide prevention, mental health, and alcohol and other drug use in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.
- Expanded access to cultural safety training for local GPs and practice staff through the Australian Indigenous Doctors' Association (AIDA), with 90 online enrolments in 2025-26.
- Place-based, community-led solutions, ensuring local voices shape the design and delivery of services.
- Progressed implementation of our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), strengthening our commitment to reconciliation and health equity, while preparing to transition to a 'Stretch' RAP that will embed reconciliation into core business strategies.

Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN region is home to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living across metropolitan, rural and remote areas. Our PHN works closely with Aboriginal Medical Services and mainstream primary care providers to expand availability of culturally safe care.

6.5%
of residents are Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander

11.6%
of children (aged 0-14) in our region are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

Impact

9,313
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people received a targeted mental health service

Commissioned services

Integrated Team Care and Chronic Conditions	Goondir Health Services
Mental Health Services	Carbal Medical Centre, Cherbourg Regional Aboriginal and Islander Community Controlled Health Services, Goolburri, Goondi Health Services and Kambu Health
Psychology and Counselling Services	Waikai Waian Healing
Child and Youth Services	Goolburri Aboriginal Health & Goondir Health Services
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People Regional Approach to Suicide Prevention	Carbal Medical Centre, Cherbourg Regional Aboriginal and Islander Community Controlled Health Services, Goolburri, Goondi Health Services & Kambu Health
Integrated Team Care	Carbal Medical Centre, Cherbourg Regional Aboriginal and Islander Community Controlled Health Services & Pius X Aboriginal Corporation

Elder's Health Diary launched for Darling Downs community

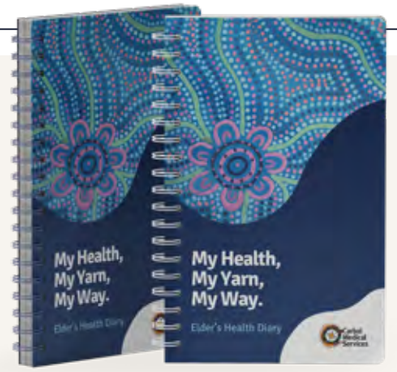
Earlier this year, the PHN celebrated the launch of the Elder's Health Diary alongside Carbal Medical Services and local Toowoomba Elders – a milestone that placed community voices and cultural knowledge at the heart of the project.

Co-designed in close consultation with Elders and service providers, this new edition builds on the success of previous resources while bringing renewed focus on care, culture and connection.

The diary enables Elders to take an active role in their health and wellbeing through a personalised space to record contact information, appointments, medications and bush medicine, as well as track blood pressure and blood sugar levels.

It also includes guidance on navigating health, aged care and digital services across the Darling Downs region, ensuring Elders have practical tools to make informed decisions.

Artwork by proud Gomeroi and Dhunghutti artist Jenna Bradshaw features throughout the diary, reflecting community identity and creating a resource that feels both meaningful and empowering.



This latest launch follows the strong uptake of the Elder Care Journal, introduced last year and co-designed with the Kambu Health Members Elders Group, featuring vibrant artwork by local Aboriginal artist Anthony Kemp.

The PHN partnered with Kambu Health to develop the Elder Care Journal for Elders in the Ipswich region — more than 1,500 copies have been distributed, and the journal has sparked interest from organisations right across Australia looking to develop similar resources.

Place an order by visiting:
ddwmphn.com.au/elder-care-journal



Elder's Health Diary launch - Toowoomba, Queensland

Walking alongside community

Carbal Medical Services is an Aboriginal Medical Service providing culturally safe, community-led healthcare to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people across the Darling Downs region.

Carbal's Integrated Team Care (ITC) program is commissioned by Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN, and supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people throughout their health journey, helping them better understand their health, access the care they need, and stay connected to services that support their ongoing wellbeing.

The program assists people living with a range of eligible chronic conditions, including diabetes, heart disease, lung disease, kidney disease, cancer and mental health conditions.

Providing practical, person-centred support, the ITC team works closely with GPs, specialists and other healthcare providers to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people navigate and engage with healthcare services.

In 2025-26, the ITC team supported 716 clients, delivered 15,583 care coordination services, and provided 1,011 transport assists, helping people access essential healthcare.

ITC Care Coordinator Shayla Collins says, "A big part of my role is helping people feel supported and understood."

She often helps people navigate the healthcare system by explaining medical information in a clear and meaningful way, checking in to ensure they stay on track with their care plans, coordinating appointments and services, and assisting with transport, costs and paperwork that can otherwise become barriers to care.

> "Healthcare can be overwhelming at times, so we take the time to explain things clearly, walk alongside people through their journey, and help remove some of the barriers that can make it harder to access care."
>
> — Shayla Collins


ITC Care Coordinator, Shayla Collins

Indigenous Wellness Connect bringing healthcare closer to community

For many people living in rural and remote communities, accessing healthcare can mean travelling long distances and navigating multiple services.

Indigenous Wellness Connect is helping to change that by bringing culturally safe, coordinated care closer to home for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, supporting better access to services that understand local needs.

This program is an innovative partnership between the Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN and the Macintyre Health Alliance, supported through an Australian Government Innovative Model of Care grant.

The care model combines local care coordination with a multidisciplinary team of GPs, specialists and allied health professionals, connected through advanced telehealth technology and enhanced digital connectivity.

This enables patients to access a broader range of services within their community, improving continuity of care and reducing barriers to treatment.

Earlier this year, we connected with Project Say it with a Smile to deliver customised dental kits for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities of Boggabilla and Toomelah, promoting positive oral health outcomes and preventative care within the community.

By blending innovation with cultural responsiveness, Indigenous Wellness Connect is creating a more connected healthcare experience and helping to improve equitable access to care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in the Goondiwindi region.

Learn more about IWC by visiting: *ddwmphn.com.au/indigenouswellnessconnect*



IWC distributing customised dental kits at the Spring into Play event - Boggabilla, New South Wales



IWC Telehealth Coordinator - Georgia Killen

Multicultural health



8.9%
of residents were born in non-English speaking countries

15%
people in our region were born overseas

In our region, the most common non-English speaking countries of origin are:

- India
- Samoa
- Iraq
- Germany
- Philippines

Regional settlements this year, by stream:

- **1,001** family
- **2,823** skilled
- **540** humanitarian

This year, we strengthened our focus on improving health and wellbeing outcomes for multicultural communities across the region, particularly people from refugee and humanitarian backgrounds. Many community members face complex challenges, including higher health needs, unfamiliarity with the healthcare system, language barriers, and difficulties accessing transport and essential services.

This work has been particularly important in Toowoomba, Ipswich and the Lockyer Valley, which are home to growing and diverse multicultural communities.

Through strong engagement and collaboration, we continued to work alongside local organisations, community leaders and service providers to improve access to culturally responsive care and support.

Collaboration remains central to our approach. Through participation in local networks, consultation workshops and joint initiatives, we help strengthen service coordination, improve information sharing and support responses tailored to the needs of multicultural communities.

The Refugee Health Program supports people from refugee backgrounds to access primary healthcare and build confidence navigating local health services.

Through culturally responsive health education, tailored support and opportunities for social connection, the program strengthens health literacy, reduces barriers to care and promotes wellbeing as individuals and families settle into their new communities.

Impact

114
people from refugee backgrounds supported in Ipswich

200
people from refugee backgrounds supported in Toowoomba

Commissioned services

Refugee Health Nurse Outreach Program	SSI
Refugee Health Outreach Program	Multicultural Australia



Multicultural consultation workshop - Gatton, Queensland

Multicultural voices help shape our local service planning

Listening to communities is central to ensuring health services reflect local needs and priorities. This year, the PHN brought together members of the Gatton multicultural community, alongside local health and community organisations including West Moreton Health and Thriving Lockyer Kids, for a collaborative workshop focused on understanding the factors that influence health and wellbeing across the region.

Held at the Lockyer Community Centre, the workshop provided an opportunity for participants to share their experiences, identify community strengths and discuss opportunities to improve health and wellbeing outcomes for multicultural residents.

Discussions explored the needs of people across all life stages, as well as the barriers that can impact access to care and support.

Insights gathered through the workshop will help inform future planning, service design and commissioning activities, ensuring services are responsive to the evolving needs of multicultural communities. By working in partnership with communities, we can ensure health services and supports are informed by local needs and aspirations.

The PHN extends sincere thanks to Hassan Delfi Manish from the Community Action for Multicultural Society (CAMS) Program for facilitating the use of the Lockyer Community Centre, and for supporting community members to participate in the discussions.



Thriving Lockyer Kids, Surviving and Thriving session - Gatton, Queensland



Thriving Lockyer Kids, Surviving and Thriving session - Gatton, Queensland

Children and young people



4.7 per 1,000
live births was the rate of infant mortality
QLD: 4.1% AUS: 3.2%

2.0
live births per woman is the fertility rate in our region
QLD: 1.59 AUS: 1.54

16.2%
of children are developmentally vulnerable on 2 or more domains
QLD: 13.6% AUS: 12.5%

93.9%
of children are fully immunised by age 5
QLD: 93.2 AUS: 94.3

7.0%
of babies were low birthweight
QLD: 6.7% AUS: 6.5%

Getting things right in the first few years of life is a critical investment in lifelong health outcomes, and our future health system. Families in our region deserve well-coordinated, accessible and supportive health services to give their children and young people the best start in life.

Our highlights

Nurse-led Youth Sexual Health Program - True Relationships and Reproductive Health

The Nurse-Led centre-based program operated from clinics in Ipswich and Toowoomba, delivering consultation, screening, advice, treatment, and follow-up as required. The model provided holistic, patient-centred, and culturally responsive care for young people aged 12-25 years, with a particular focus on those experiencing barriers to access.

Educational resources and brief intervention were provided to improve health literacy in sexual and reproductive health, healthy relationships, and contraception.

Early Years and Young Persons' Health Strategy 2025-2028

The Early Years and Young Persons' Health Strategy 2025–2028 outlines our commitment to giving every child and young person in the Darling Downs and West Moreton region the strongest possible start to life.

Developed in partnership with health, education and community stakeholders, the strategy reflects what families and young people told us they need most: continuity of care, better navigation of services, stronger local support, and early intervention that is responsive to the challenges they face.

By focusing on healthy communities, strong primary care, effective partnerships and a child-safe organisational culture, this strategy sets out a roadmap for long-term, sustainable change.

Together with our partners, we are investing in a connected, equitable and thriving health system that empowers our youngest community members to lead healthy lives now and into the future.



Early Years and Young Persons' Strategy Launch - Plainland, Queensland

Thriving Lockyer Kids

Thriving Lockyer Kids is a place based, collaborative initiative focused on ensuring all children in the Lockyer Valley have the best start to life. The program coordinator is employed by our PHN and works outwards within the broader partnership.

The initiative continued to drive meaningful outcomes this year, with a focus on expanding child and family hub development, supporting workforce wellbeing, and improving access to early support for families.

More than 300 local families were engaged to identify gaps in perinatal support, with findings backed by local health data. These insights informed action to improve access to soft entry points and ongoing support for families during the prenatal and early years.

Throughout the year, we engaged with local communities, services and organisations to share progress, strengthen connections and explore local perspectives on health and wellbeing. By listening to local families and working collaboratively, Thriving Lockyer Kids is helping deliver community-led solutions that reflect the strengths, aspirations and needs of the Lockyer Valley.

Through a range of community-based activities, the program delivered child development assessment appointments at Gatton State School, integrated Child Health services into local playgroups, and supported key early years events including Under 5s, Gatton Under 8s and Messy Play. By bringing services into familiar and accessible settings, the program helped strengthen connections between families and the support available to them.



Under 8s Day at Gatton State School - Gatton, Queensland



Under 8s Day at Gatton State School - Gatton, Queensland

First 2000 Days

We recognise that the first 2000 days of a child's life, spanning from preconception through to starting school, are a critical period for development.

The PHN works in alignment with our cross-system partners to deliver and coordinate programs that make a difference in the first years of life.

Impact

We measure our progress holistically through a combination of key frameworks and meaningful relationships with providers and communities, ensuring our work remains responsive to local needs.

1,050
total episodes of care for the Nurse -led Youth Sexual Health Program

900+
listens GPs in a Pod episodes covering early years and youth persons health topics

Strengthening family wellbeing through community-led support

Supporting local families through connection, education and community remains at the heart of the Mums n' Bubs Wellbeing Group in Wondai.

Coordinated by Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN, Darling Downs Health, Barambah Physio and local community organisations, the Wellbeing Group provides a welcoming space where new and expectant mothers can build friendships, access health information and connect with services that support healthy early childhood development.

During the year, local Women's Health Physiotherapist Julie delivered an informative session on postnatal pelvic floor health, helping mothers understand the role pelvic floor exercises play in recovery after childbirth, bladder and bowel control, and long-term wellbeing.

Parents also explored key infant developmental milestones, gaining practical insights into supporting their babies' physical, social, emotional and communication development through everyday interactions and play. Julie said the collaboration between health services and community organisations helps create a holistic support network for families.

Representatives from the Wondai Library's First 5 Forever program also joined the group to speak with mothers about the importance of reading, singing, talking and playing with children from birth.

Their presentation highlighted the free resources and activities available through the local library, encouraging families to become involved in community programs that support early childhood development.

Participants valued the opportunity to learn, share experiences and connect with others, with many describing the group as a source of reassurance, friendship and belonging Through strong partnerships between health and community services, the Mums n' Bubs Wellbeing Group continues to play an important role in supporting healthy, connected families across Wondai and the surrounding areas.



Mums n Bubs Wellbeing Group session - Wondai, Queensland

> "Bringing together health education, child development information and community resources gives parents the confidence and knowledge they need during those important early years."
>
> — Women's Health Physiotherapist

Older persons health



67
residential aged care homes in our region

92%
average occupancy rate in residential aged care homes

18%
of people in our region are aged 65 years or older

Our PHN works closely with primary care and service providers to help ensure older people living in our region are connected with services that enable them to age well and stay connected.

Our region has a culturally diverse population of older persons living across urban, suburban and rural settings. As a PHN, our role is to ensure the health system can efficiently and sustainably provide care for our community members as they grow older.

We work closely with health providers to commission and coordinate services that support older people to maintain their health, wellbeing and independence.

Through initiatives like care finders, the Elder Care Journal and the Healthy Ageing Support program, we are working to strengthen health literacy, improve navigation of the health and aged care systems, and support older people to remain independent and connected to their communities for as long as possible.

In October 2025, we launched our Joint Regional Older Persons Strategy 2025-2030: Stronger for Life, with the Regional Health Collaborative. Stronger for Life lays the path to achieving our vision of a future-fit health system that enables older people to age well, on their own terms.

It will work across the system to enable better-coordinated transitions and timely access to services that are closer to home.

Stronger for Life builds upon important, collaborative achievements and connections established through Feel Well, Live Well – Older Persons Strategy, which was developed in partnership between the PHN, Darling Downs Health and West Moreton Health in 2021.

Feel Well, Live Well delivered strong outcomes in a time of major sector change. With the establishment of the RHC, Stronger for Life continues and extends the path for this important work, with a strong commitment from all partners to prioritise the needs of older people across the region.

In December 2025, we finalised our Palliative Care Health Needs Assessment. The assessment brings together data, service mapping, and stakeholder insights to identify gaps, strengths, and priority areas for improvement.

This work will help inform future planning, and collaborative action to improve experiences and outcomes for individuals, families, and communities accessing palliative and end-of-life care services across the region.

Our focus is on strengthening connections across health, aged care and community services to make it easier for older people to access the right support at the right time, helping them maintain their health, independence and community connections as they age.

The Healthy Ageing Support program is part of the PHN's early intervention initiative that helps connect older people, as early as possible, to the primary care, community and at-home services required so they are able to remain living in their own home for as long as possible.

Impact

861
older people supported through Healthy Ageing Support

362
services delivered through Healthy Ageing Support

Commissioned services

ADA Australia	**Community Development Services**
Footprints Community	**Healthy Lifestyles Australia**
Ipswich Nurses	**Smilo.ai**
Pharmaceuticals Society of Australia	



Care finders connect care

For older people, navigating the aged care system can be challenging, particularly for those without family or friends nearby to provide support. Care finders across our region help people engage with My Aged Care, navigate the assessment process, access suitable aged care services, and connect with other supports available within their community.

The care finder role often extends beyond supporting vulnerable older people to access aged care services. In one case, a client's home was tragically destroyed by fire. Working collaboratively with housing and aged care organisations, the care finder helped the client complete essential documentation, navigate housing options and connect with the supports they needed during a highly distressing time.

Through coordinated advocacy and collaboration, the client was able to secure and relocate to a new home within a relatively short period.

Commissioned by our PHN with funding from the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing, care finder services are free and delivered through two commissioned providers in our region: Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia (ADA) and Footprints Community Limited.

Care finders provide intensive, one-on-one support to ensure older people receive timely and appropriate aged care assistance.
The care finder initiative is part of broader national aged care reforms responding to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety. It plays a key role in integrating health and aged care services at a local level.

1,073
older people supported to find services

6,744
service contacts provided

799
engagement and rapport-building interactions

462
high level check ins

Departmental reporting requirements for the care finder program changed during 2025-26. As a result, selected measures are reported for the period July to December 2025 only and are not directly comparable to previous years.

Strengthening workforce capability in Aged Care

The PHN partnered with Lutheran Services' Orana Aged Care and other Residential Aged Care Homes (RACHs) in Kingaroy to strengthen after-hours care and support better outcomes for older people living in residential aged care.

Focused on enhancing clinical communication, workforce capability and after-hours care coordination, the initiative brought together general practices and local aged care providers and health services to build a more connected and responsive model of care.

Through consultation with local stakeholders, the PHN identified opportunities to strengthen clinical handover practices, helping to reduce unnecessary hospital transfers and improve continuity of care. We worked collaboratively with aged care staff, GPs and hospital representatives to co-design a clinical handover tool, supporting clearer communication and more coordinated decision-making across the care journey.

Working alongside Orana Aged Care, we strengthened after-hours care planning and escalation pathways, connected the service with reliable after-hours support options, and delivered targeted training for management and frontline staff. The sessions covered after-hours care planning resources, clinical escalation tools, policy frameworks, digital health and My Health Record training, and connection to 1800MEDICARE services.

The initiative was warmly received by the aged care home, with Clinical Manager Linsu Boniface describing the training as "highly effective, informative and engaging" and highlighting the value of the collaborative approach in addressing local challenges and enhancing care for residents.

Through targeted education, tailored resources and strong local partnerships, the initiative empowered aged care teams to navigate clinical situations with greater confidence, contributing to more coordinated care and an improved experience for residents and their families.

"At the heart of this work is a shared commitment to the wellbeing of older people in our community. By working collaboratively and investing in workforce capability, we can strengthen care pathways, build confidence in aged care staff and support better outcomes for older people."

> "Our role is to equip aged care staff with the knowledge, confidence and practical tools they need to make informed decisions and provide timely care.
>
> By strengthening workforce capability and after-hours care arrangements, we can help reduce avoidable hospital presentations and ensure residents receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time."
>
> — PHN's Aged Care Coordinator, Lindi



PHN's Aged Care Coordinator - Lindi Mpala - Orana Aged Care, Kingaroy, Queensland

OneBridge delivers homelessness outreach support

This year, we continued our partnership with OneBridge to improve access to healthcare and support for people experiencing, or at risk of, homelessness across Toowoomba and Ipswich.

Through the Homelessness Health Access Program, people can access free, community-based healthcare and support through a mobile outreach model that delivers care directly to where it is needed most. By reducing barriers to care and providing warm referrals, the program helps people connect with health, housing and community services that support both their immediate needs and longer-term wellbeing.

The multidisciplinary service includes a Registered Nurse and Social Worker who provide holistic, person-centred support. The nurse delivers health assessments, diagnostic testing, wound care, preventative health advice, skin checks, physical and sexual health support, mental health support, and referral pathways into primary care. Practical healthcare needs, such as prescriptions, dressings and medical tests, can also be coordinated through the program.

Working alongside the nurse, the social worker helps individuals navigate complex systems and connect with housing, health and community services. This includes referrals to primary care providers, Centrelink and Medicare, local housing services, Hospital and Health Services, and other supports that address both immediate needs and longer-term wellbeing.

Through its mobile outreach model and integrated support approach, the program improves access to healthcare and essential services, strengthens pathways to ongoing care, and supports better health, wellbeing and housing outcomes for people experiencing or at risk of homelessness.

Building on the program's impact, OneBridge expanded service delivery in March 2026 to include an after-hours component for a Women's and Children's Clinic in West Moreton, improving access to timely care for vulnerable women and children.

By working closely with schools, community centres and local providers, the service is helping people connect with the right support at the right time and reducing the burden of navigating the health system alone.

824
clients

863
episodes of care

756
telephone sessions

2,580
face-to-face sessions



OneBridge team - Toowoomba, Queensland

> “We’re so fortunate to partner with you all and create incredible impact through a community based, equity informed lens. Our work together within neighbourhoods has been profound. We look forward to continuing this incredible work together - with your incredible crew, and local community.”
>
> — OneBridge

Mental health, suicide prevention, and alcohol and other drugs



258
young people accessed youth specific mental health services including 20% Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people

66,909
people in the region with a mental health condition (including depression or anxiety)

17.1%
was the age-standardised rate (ASR) of high or very high psychological distress in the region

18.5 per 100,000
residents aged 0-74 die by suicide and self-inflicted injuries per year

This year the PHN continued to prioritise strengthening mental health, suicide prevention, and alcohol and other drug (AOD) services across the region.

Guided by community insights, system reform and a focus on integration, we continued to work towards a more connected, person-centred and place-based mental health system that meets the needs of local communities.

Through strong partnerships with primary care providers, mental health and AOD treatment providers, Hospital and Health Services, and community organisations, we have continued to support greater integration and coordination across the care continuum.

Our vision continues to guide this work: creating integrated, locally designed, hub-based services that make it easier for people to access the right mental health care, in the right place and at the right time.

Looking ahead, the PHN will lead the statewide AOD Connected Care initiative on behalf of participating Queensland Primary Health Networks. Funded through the Queensland Mental Health Commission, the initiative will enhance AOD capability, improve service integration, and support early, culturally safe and trauma-informed care.

Impact

760
people accessed low intensity mental health service

2,618
people accessed psychological therapies (mild to moderate)

2,107
people accessed clinical care coordination (moderate to severe)

Commissioned services

Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Services - Mainstream	Lives Lived Well QUIHN
Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Services – First Nations	Kambu Health Carbal
Mental Health Clinical Care Coordination	Mi-Mind Neami National HealthWISE
Commonwealth Psychosocial Support Program	Australasian Centre for Rural and Remote Mental Health Limited Impact Community Services HealthWISE Wellways Momentum Mental Health LTD South West Qld Ltd Neami National
Connected Mental Health Support	Wattle House Toowoomba (Wellways Consortium)
Low Intensity Mental Empowerment (LIME) Program	Lives Lived Well
Mental health, Commonwealth Psychosocial Support Program and Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Services - Identified	Carbal CRAICCHS Goolburri Goondir Kambu Health
Perinatal mental health services	Peach Tree Perinatal Wellness
Psychological Therapies	Lives Lived Well Family Services Australia Barry Sheehan Psychology Lumsden Psychology, and Valley Psychology
Universal Aftercare	Richmond Fellowship Queensland
Youth-Focused Mental Health Services	headspace Warwick: RHealth Ltd headspace Ipswich: Stride Mental Health headspace Toowoomba: Youturn Youth Enhanced Services: Stride, Youturn Youth Insearch
Medicare Mental Health Centres	Kingaroy and Ipswich - Open Minds Warwick - RHealth
Medicare Mental Health Phone Service	Neami National

^Service providers commissioned FY25/26.
The PHN also commissions Medicare Mental Health Services across the region.

Wattle House Toowoomba

Earlier this year, we launched Wattle House Toowoomba, a new integrated mental health service providing free, welcoming and person-centred support for people across the Toowoomba region.

The service was officially launched in April 2026, along with Toowoomba Mayor Cr Geoff McDonald, who joined stakeholders for a walkthrough of the interim site.

Complementing existing mental health services, Wattle House offers timely support for people experiencing mental health challenges or distress, while helping them navigate and connect with the broader health system.

The multidisciplinary team includes peer workers with lived experience, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, bicultural workers, and access to interpreting and translation services.

The service also provides counselling and psychological therapies, short-term practical support, and assistance to connect with GPs and other health and community services, helping people access the right care at the right time.







Wattle House Toowoomba, Queensland

Healthy Minds, Healthy Lives

Darling Downs and West Moreton Joint Regional Mental Health, Suicide Prevention and Alcohol and Other Drug Plan 2022-2027

The joint regional comprehensive Mental Health, Suicide Prevention, Alcohol and Other Drug Plan titled 'Healthy Minds, Healthy Lives' continues to lay the foundation for improved coordination and collaboration across the region.

A partnership between our PHN, Darling Downs Health and West Moreton Health, the Plan supports a shared vision where all people in our region can access the mental health, suicide prevention, and alcohol and other drug services they need.

As Healthy Minds, Healthy Lives approaches its conclusion, work is underway to develop the next Joint Regional Plan for 2028-2033. This next phase will build on the partnerships, insights and achievements of the current plan, setting a strategic roadmap for the continued delivery of coordinated, evidence informed initiatives across Darling Downs and West Moreton.

Development of the new plan will include a needs assessment alongside engagement with consumers, carers, communities, service providers and key stakeholders. This process will ensure future priorities respond to emerging needs, local expertise and a shared commitment to improving mental health and wellbeing outcomes for people across the region.



The Plan identifies four key focus areas:

- integration and coordination
- availability, awareness and access to services
- workforce and support
- services that meet the needs of individuals and populations across the lifespan.

Your Experience of Service (YES) Survey

Listening to patients about their experiences of service is at the heart of delivering mental healthcare that provides positive outcomes for patients.

The Your Experience of Service (YES) Survey is conducted every six months (Autumn and Spring), offering valuable insights into how consumers feel about the mental health services commissioned by the PHN.

Results have steadily reported positive overall experience for the majority of consumers in the region, and demonstrate the commitment of service providers to delivering responsive, safe and warm environments.

This year we worked towards improving our response rate, which was highly successful rising from 9% to 12%, thanks to the efforts of local providers in promoting and ensuring clients felt comfortable to

The YES Survey is conducted every six months, and responses remain anonymous and confidential. Only aggregated, non-identifiable data is shared with service providers.

This ensures that consumer voices are heard while maintaining privacy and integrity in reporting. Each survey round also identifies areas for further improvement. The PHN works closely with providers to unpack these results and seek opportunities to improve care.



4,879
surveys distributed

567
responses received

12%
response rate

82%
said they always or sometimes felt safe using the service

80%
reported that their individuality was always or sometimes respected

82%
felt their decision-making rights were always or sometimes respected

81%
felt their support and care needs were always or sometimes met

Medicare Mental Health services

Medicare Mental Health Centres and phone line continue to play a vital role in providing free, welcoming access to mental health support across our region.

At the heart of the model is a stepped care approach, ensuring people receive support tailored to their individual needs.

This ranges from early intervention and low-intensity services through to more complex care, including referrals to tertiary mental health services and ongoing engagement with general practice.

Our Ipswich centre entered its third year of operation, continuing to deliver strong outcomes for the community, while the Kingaroy centre demonstrated its value as a responsive model of care tailored to the needs of the Kingaroy and wider South Burnett communities.

We are committed to designing the future of health services in our region by closing service gaps and ensuring everyone can access coordinated, appropriate care.

These centres are key to building a more connected, person-centred mental health system across Darling Downs and West Moreton region.



Phone service

The Medicare Mental Health phone service 1800 595 212 can be accessed by consumers, their families, carers, GPs, service providers and other health professionals.

The no cost phone service is available Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5pm (excluding public holidays).

medicare

Mental Health
1800 595 212

In-person centres

Kingaroy Medicare Mental Health Centre
98 Kingaroy Street, Kingaroy

medicare

Mental Health Centre
Kingaroy

Ipswich Medicare Mental Health Centre
Nicholas Street Precinct - Level 1,
Eats Building, Ipswich

medicare

Mental Health Centre
Ipswich

Warwick Medicare Mental Health Centre
Operated from pop-up site in 2026, moving to permanent site in 2027. Pop-up site: 163 Palmerin Street, Warwick

medicare

Mental Health Centre
Warwick





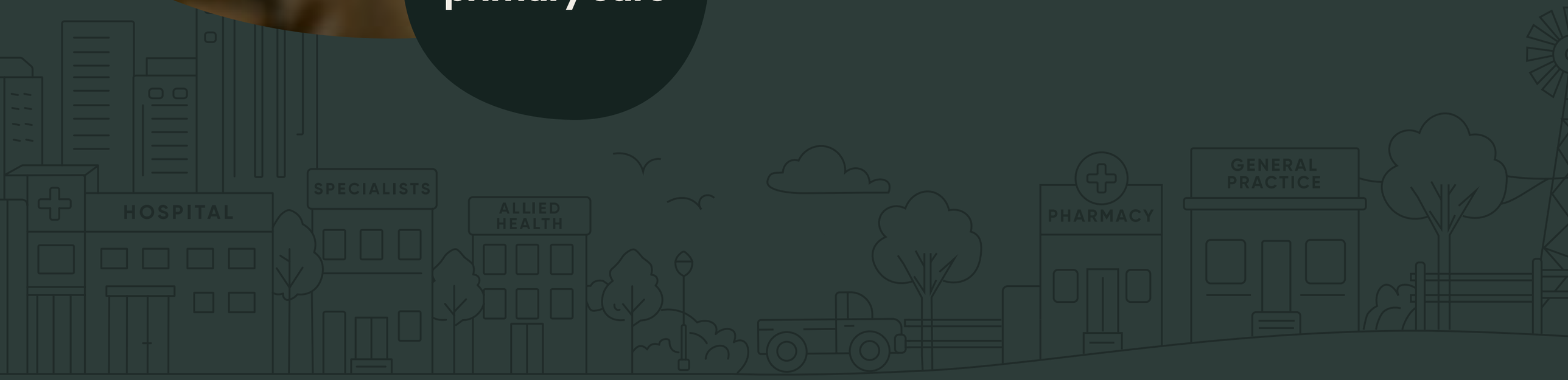
Medicare Mental Health Centre - Ipswich, Queensland





Healthy primary care

Developing a **thriving primary care system**, that is **strong**, **resilient**, **innovative** and **digitally enabled**, with a supported and sustainable workforce.



Healthy primary care

Our primary care team supported general practice and allied health professionals to deliver high quality and patient-centred care in the region, while also navigating significant sector change.

In collaboration with primary care providers in the region, our strategic focus areas in primary care this year were:

- Supporting local implementation of national reform initiatives.
- Driving digital health uplift and enabling continuous quality improvement.
- Jointly developing local solutions to sustainability challenges.
- Strengthening primary care resilience to respond to emergencies.

This work is our contribution towards developing a thriving primary care system, that is strong and resilient, innovative and digitally enabled, with a supported and sustainable workforce.

100.2
general medical practitioners per 100,000 people in our region
QLD: 109.2 AUS: 102.3

176
general practices in our region

740.2
general medical practitioners full-time equivalent in our region

155
retail pharmacies in our region



Key strategic areas of focus this year:

Multidisciplinary Teams

We supported the delivery of multidisciplinary team (MDT) care across 13 commissioned sites, strengthening collaboration between healthcare providers and improving care coordination. By bringing together a range of health professionals around the needs of each patient, MDTs enhance access to integrated, person-centred care and support better health outcomes.

Patient Care Facilitator program

This program assists patients from Ipswich Hospital's general medical ward to avoid hospital readmissions. This year, a total of 1,299 patients were referred to the program, with nearly 92% making a follow-up appointment with their GP at one of our 11 participating practices.

MyMedicare

This year, we continued to support practices across the region to implement MyMedicare — a voluntary patient registration model designed to strengthen continuity of care. This included helping practices engage with program requirements and associated initiatives aimed at improving care coordination and chronic condition management, contributing to more connected and patient-centred healthcare.

Accreditation

We continue to support general practices to achieve and maintain accreditation by providing guidance, resources and connections to relevant accreditation providers. This helped strengthen quality improvement processes, enhance data management and streamline systems to support safe, effective and high-quality patient care.

Workforce recruitment

We regularly promote local primary care job vacancies in the area through our website, this year promoting more than 50 health-related vacancies, a workforce dinner, and a Registrar rural excursion to promote working in the region.

GP Smart Referrals

We support the use of GP Smart Referrals, which are digital referrals integrated with GP practice management software (currently Best Practice and Medical Director) to enable faster, streamlined management of referrals to Queensland Public Hospitals.

Quality improvement

Through targeted quality improvement initiatives, our Primary Care Liaison team worked alongside general practices to strengthen data quality, support clinical audits and drive continuous improvement. This work strengthened data quality, informed continuous improvement and supported better patient care outcomes.

General Practice Liaison Officers

Through engagement with general practices across the region, our General Practice Liaison Officers worked with the Primary Care Liaison team to help strengthen integration between primary care and the wider health system. This work improved awareness of available programs and services, supported more coordinated care and enhanced patient access to timely and appropriate healthcare.

Navigating changes in primary care



Approx 96%
of general practices nationally are registered for MyMedicare



Approx 60%
of practices across our region are now fully bulk billed



89%
of Eligible practices have Primary Sense (ie compatible software)

This year was a period of significant change in primary care, with reforms creating new opportunities to improve access, continuity and quality of care. We worked alongside practices in our region to help them navigate these reforms, providing timely information, practical resources and support as system changes were introduced.

Bulk Billing Practice Incentive Program

In November 2025, the Australian Government expanded eligibility for MBS bulk billing incentives and established the Bulk Billing Practice Incentive Program (BBPIP).

We supported practice in preparing for and adopting the BBPIP by providing regular communications and practical resources to guide planning and implementation.

These measures support general practices to bulk bill all Medicare-eligible patients for eligible services, meaning more people in our community can access care without facing out-of-pocket costs.

Primary Sense

We also supported practices to transition from PenCS to Primary Sense, the most widely used non-commercial electronic data extraction and clinical decision support tool in Australia.

It supports our practices to deliver real-time, data-driven insights that help practices provide safer, smarter and more proactive patient care. It empowers GPs, nurses and practice managers to work from a single source of truth, fostering a culture of continuous quality improvement.

Better Access initiative

November 2025 also brought change to the Australian Government's Better Access initiative to improve continuity of care and better integrate physical and mental health.

Through Better Access, eligible patients can claim a Medicare benefit for up to 10 individual and 10 group therapy mental health treatment services per calendar year if they have been assessed with a clinically diagnosed mental disorder.

We kept practices informed of the changes through regular communications, supporting them to navigate the updated arrangements and continue connecting patients with appropriate care.

MyMedicare

This year we continued to support practices to enrol with MyMedicare. It formalises the relationship between patients, their general practice, GP and primary care teams. Evidence shows that seeing the same GP and healthcare team regularly leads to better health outcomes.

By strengthening continuity of care, MyMedicare complements reforms such as BBPIP and Better Access, helping practices build stronger, ongoing relationships with patients and support more coordinated care.

Strengthening workforce

Across the Darling Downs and West Moreton region, communities continue to benefit from the dedication, expertise and leadership of a committed primary care workforce. From experienced GPs serving rural communities to emerging health professionals establishing their careers in regional practice, local clinicians play a vital role in delivering accessible, high-quality care.

Ensuring the long-term sustainability of this workforce remains a key priority, particularly in rural and remote areas where recruitment, retention and succession planning continue to present challenges. As workforce needs evolve, targeted and place-based approaches are essential to attracting, developing and retaining the healthcare professionals our communities rely on.

To help address these challenges, the PHN is proud to be part of a Queensland PHN Consortium delivering the Australian General Practice Training Workforce Planning and Prioritisation (GP WPP) program, funded by the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing.

The GP WPP program supports national GP training reforms by helping ensure registrar placements are aligned with the workforce needs and priorities of local communities.

Through our role in the consortium, we:

- Provide independent, place-based advice on workforce needs across general practice catchments.
- Assess current and future demand for GPs across the region.
- Identify local training capacity and community readiness to host GP registrars.
- Support pathways that encourage registrars to live, train and build their careers in the region.

By grounding workforce planning in local knowledge and community need, this work helps strengthen the future primary care workforce and supports continued access to quality healthcare across the Darling Downs and West Moreton region.

In addition to workforce planning, the PHN continues to:

- Support practices in developing succession plans for retiring GPs.
- Work with training providers to enhance rural training capacity.
- Champion rural general practice as a rewarding and impactful career path.
- Strengthen collaboration between primary care, education, and community sectors.

As we look ahead, the PHN will continue to lead regional efforts to ensure our communities remain supported by a capable and supported primary care workforce.

Medicare Urgent Care Clinics

46,722
unique patient visits

34,215
people have received care

88.3%
people said they would otherwise have gone to the hospital Emergency Department

Medicare Urgent Care Clinics (UCCs) play an important role in improving access to primary care across our region, providing timely treatment for urgent but non-life-threatening conditions when a GP isn't available.

Designed as a contemporary, community-connected model of care, UCCs offer walk-in, culturally safe and fully bulk-billed services, ensuring people can access the care they need, when they need it. Three Medicare UCCs operate across our region in Goodna, Ipswich and Toowoomba, providing extended-hours care seven days a week for acute episodic illnesses and minor injuries.

Services include assessment and treatment for conditions such as fractures, sprains, minor burns, ear infections, urinary tract infections and respiratory illnesses. Established in partnership with West Moreton Health and Darling Downs Health, these clinics reflect a shared commitment to delivering accessible, locally responsive healthcare solutions.

With onsite radiology and pathology services and no out-of-pocket costs, the Medicare UCCs provide a valuable alternative to emergency departments for people requiring immediate care who are unable to access their regular GP.

The Ripley Satellite Health Centre further strengthens urgent care access in the region. Operating seven days a week from 8am to 10pm, the centre provides walk-in treatment for a range of common injuries and illnesses, including strains and sprains, fractures, minor head injuries, infections, rashes, eye conditions, cuts, burns, toothaches, earaches and fevers.

Community and general practice awareness has continued to increase throughout this year, with our ddwmphn.com.au/findtherightcare site providing guidance to community members about care options in the region.

To ensure information is accessible to the diverse communities we serve, we provided 11 translated Medicare UCC resources to help ensure people can access clear, culturally appropriate information and navigate care with confidence.

The Goodna Medicare Urgent Care Clinic (pictured right) welcomed Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Oxley MP Milton Dick in October 2025. Their visit highlighted the clinic's contribution to improving access to timely urgent care and recognised the dedication and expertise of the healthcare professionals and staff who provide exceptional care and support to the local community every day.



Goodna Medicare Urgent Care Clinic visit with Prime Minister Anthony Albanese

Goodna Medicare Urgent Care Clinic
Goodna Marketplace, 2 Smiths Road, Goodna QLD 4300

Ipswich Medicare Urgent Care Clinic
FS1 Ipswich Riverlink Shopping Centre, 2 The Terrace, North Ipswich QLD 4305

Toowoomba Medicare Urgent Care Clinic
Cnr West Street and, 261-269 James Street, Toowoomba City QLD 4350

Improving access to endometriosis and pelvic pain care

This year we celebrated the official opening of the Toowoomba Endometriosis and Pelvic Pain Clinic (EPPC), with the team at Drayton Medical Centre and Senator Corinne Mulholland.

Commissioned by Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN, this clinic is part of the Australian Government's expansion of endometriosis and pelvic pain clinics nationwide, increasing the total number of clinics to 33, with at least one in each PHN region.

The clinic provides free, multidisciplinary care for people experiencing endometriosis, pelvic pain, perimenopause and menopause. Services include specialised assessments, evidence-based treatment options, pain and lifestyle management support, and coordinated referrals to allied health and specialist services.

Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN CEO Lucille Chalmers said the new clinic represents an important step forward for women's health in the region.

"We are proud to partner with Drayton Medical Centre as they deliver a service that will help women and girls in the Toowoomba region access excellent care when they need it, without needing to travel long distances."

Drayton Medical Centre GP Dr Sweta Rani said the clinic will help address gaps in the system.

"Our goal is to work closely with each patient's usual GP and care team, so they feel supported, informed and empowered throughout their health journey."

For women and girls living with endometriosis and chronic pelvic pain, timely access to specialised care can significantly improve health outcomes and quality of life. By delivering these services locally, the clinic reduces the need for travel and strengthens access to patient-centred care across the Toowoomba region.



Toowoomba Endometriosis and Pelvic Pain Clinic launch



> "Endometriosis and pelvic pain can have a profound impact on quality of life. This clinic brings care closer to home, and strengthens the essential role of general practice in women's health."
>
> — Lucille Chalmers, CEO - Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN

Making a difference through multidisciplinary care

Multidisciplinary team (MDT) programs are transforming the way care is delivered across the Darling Downs and West Moreton region, helping residents manage their health with the support of a coordinated team of healthcare professionals.

Commissioned by the PHN, these programs bring together GPs, nurses and allied health professionals to support people living with mental health and chronic conditions.

A broad range of programs has now been established across the region, including:

- Goondiwindi Falls Prevention Program
- Inglewood Chronic Disease Lifestyle and Diabetes Program
- Dalby Link-Worker Navigation Model
- Tara Echocardiography Clinic
- Lockyer Valley Chronic Pain Clinic
- South Burnett Osteoarthritis Screening Program
- Indigenous Wellness Connect (Goondiwindi cross-border region)
- Toowoomba Endometriosis and Pelvic Pain Clinic.

Country Care Connect GP-led Mental Health Clinics (currently being established in Goondiwindi, Western Downs, Lockyer Valley and Somerset).

The PHN plays an important role in supporting MDT programs, working with general practices to enhance service delivery and foster collaboration. Through our quarterly MDT Community of Practice, providers also come together to connect, share learnings and explore new approaches to improving patient care.

One local resident who benefited from this approach is Margaret, who was referred to a six-week multidisciplinary rehabilitation program at Tara Medical Centre.

Living more than 100 kilometres from the nearest town and managing multiple chronic health conditions, Margaret was looking for ways to improve her health and maintain her independence. Following a comprehensive assessment, she joined a group program close to home that combined strength and balance exercises, falls prevention education and nutrition support.

After six weeks, Margaret achieved significant improvements in her mobility and balance, with her Timed Up and Go score improving from 9.10 seconds to 7.35 seconds and her Berg Balance Score increasing from 51 to 56. Her self-rated health and wellbeing also increased from 60 per cent to between 80 and 90 per cent.

Alongside the clinical benefits, the program provided an opportunity to connect with others and build confidence in a supportive environment. *"I enjoyed the camaraderie with the group. The exercises were enjoyable and functional, and I felt safe. The support helped me change my diet and build confidence,"* Margaret said.

Dr Tim said Margaret's experience reflects the impact MDT programs are having across the region. *"These programs are about more than managing health conditions,"* Dr Tim said.

> By bringing together the right expertise and support, and listening to what matters most to patients and communities, we're helping people improve their health while also building confidence, independence and stronger connections to those around them.
>
> — Dr Tim Lloyd-Morgan



Dr Lloyd-Morgan,Tara Medical Practice

GP workforce dinner

In September 2025, we hosted a GP Workforce Dinner, bringing together over 20 stakeholders from general practice, hospitals, universities and workforce organisations to celebrate progress under the Collective Impact Plan, strengthen partnerships, and explore solutions to workforce challenges across the region.

The evening highlighted encouraging progress in building the region's future GP workforce, including successful rural training placements, leading International Medical Graduate recruitment outcomes, and expanding opportunities for medical students to train locally.

These achievements reflect a shared commitment to growing a sustainable workforce and supporting more clinicians to live, train and work in regional communities.

Discussions reinforced the importance of community-based training and retention, recognising that workforce sustainability extends beyond clinical opportunities. Supportive workplaces, meaningful community connections and a strong sense of belonging were identified as key factors in attracting and retaining health professionals for the long term.

A key theme throughout the evening was the value of locally led solutions. By bringing together partners from across the health, education and community sectors, the Collective Impact Plan is fostering collaboration to address shared challenges and develop practical strategies tailored to the unique needs of the region.

As the Collective Impact Plan continues to evolve, this shared effort is helping build a stronger, more connected primary care workforce to support the health and wellbeing of communities across the Darling Downs and West Moreton region.



GP workforce working group dinner

Disaster preparedness and resilience

14,457
alert emails sent to general practices, pharmacies and allied health

132
emergency SMS alerts sent to GPs

Primary care, in particular general practice and other community-based service providers, play a critical role in supporting communities to recover after emergencies and disasters.

General practice is often the first port of call for people suffering the detrimental effects of emergencies and disasters.

Earlier this year, Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN launched its Disaster Management Framework for primary care. The Framework guides the preparation, response and recovery activities undertaken by the primary care sector when disasters impact our region.

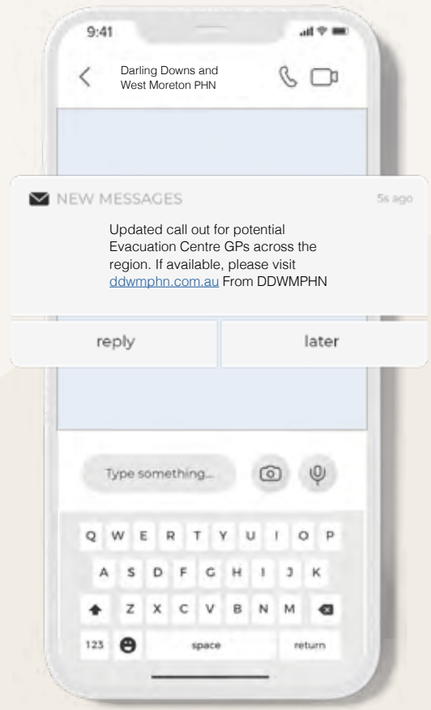
The PHN also supported primary care providers to prepare for potential impacts regarding the National Fuel Security Plan, sharing updates and practical guidance to help practices maintain service delivery and respond to changing circumstances.

In response to emergency situations and critical public health updates, the PHN provides health professionals with alerts containing urgent information, to ensure our primary healthcare system remains connected.

These updates are shared through the PHN's digital communication channels, including newsletters, website updates, podcasts and direct email support, with alerts covering issues such as measles, diphtheria, and storm season preparedness.

The PHN's podcast for primary care, GPs in a Pod, also welcomed public health experts as guests to provide timely updates on emerging and seasonal health issues. Dr Ben Brimblecombe, Public Health Registrar at the Darling Downs Public Health Unit (PHU), returned to discuss measles, vaccination recommendations, seasonal trends in influenza and COVID-19, and vaccine storage and preparedness during storm season.

Later, Dr Hannah Woodall, also a Public Health Registrar with the Darling Downs PHU, joined the show to discuss the 2026 flu vaccination program, including priority groups, timing and co-administration with COVID-19 vaccines.



Allied health

Access to the right allied health support can make a meaningful difference to people's health and wellbeing. Across the Darling Downs and West Moreton regions, allied health professionals are an integral part of the primary care system and significantly contribute to supporting positive health outcomes for our region's community.

This year we maintained a strong focus on education, connection, and professional development, with initiatives designed to better support both new and experienced clinicians in our region.

We again hosted our Allied Health Professional Development and Networking Breakfasts, providing an opportunity for over 60 allied health professionals to network with peers, gain insights into key developments impacting the sector, and hear from expert speakers.

The PHN also supported the rollout of the National Allied Health Practice Engagement Toolkit. The easy to navigate toolkit, with localisable sections, provides summary information and links to content to support busy allied health clinicians.

Our monthly Allied Health and Pharmacy Newsletter continues to be a key channel for allied health professionals in the region to stay connected with updates in the sector, professional development opportunities, and funding announcements.

Attracting and retaining staff remains a sector challenge, particularly in rural and remote areas. Through regular consultation with allied health professionals, peak bodies, and training organisations, the PHN is identifying ways to support a more sustainable workforce and advocate for system-level changes.



HealthPathways

HealthPathways is an online portal that provide GPs and other health professionals with evidence-based information on the assessment and management of a range of clinical conditions.

It is designed to be used at the point of care by GPs to support their patients through the local public and private health systems with clear referral guidance for local hospitals, specialists and allied health.

The content is developed collaboratively by local GPs, hospital clinicians and a wide range of other healthcare professionals.

This year, we introduced personal HealthPathways accounts. These were implemented to make our clinicians' experiences more personalised, convenient, and powerful.

It also meant GPs and other health professionals could access all their approved HealthPathways sites through a single login, enjoy seamless access without repeatedly logging in, easily record their HealthPathways usage for CPD reporting, and make use of the new AI-powered Smart Search feature.

We manage two HealthPathways websites: one for Darling Downs and one for West Moreton. Each site contains close to 1,000 pathways with localised information about referral information and services in each area.

Each year, we continue to expand and update the medical topics available through HealthPathways, ensuring localised information remains accurate.

The pathways reflect the ongoing collaboration between the PHN, Hospital and Health Services, and healthcare providers across the region, helping clinicians make informed decisions and supporting better health outcomes for local communities.

185,764
users

1,938
pathways across West Moreton and Darling Downs sites

228,232
sessions

9,831
referral page views for Darling Downs site

4,065
referral page views for West Moreton site

Most searched pathways:

272
hypertension

180
antenatal

Most viewed pathways:

551
medical (pathway index page)

819
antenatal – first consult

Education and events

Demand for professional development and networking opportunities continued to grow throughout the year. In response, we maintained our focus on strengthening education, engagement and collaboration across primary care through a range of successful events and initiatives.



Health Professional Meet and Greet - Dalby, Queensland



Health Professional Meet and Greet - Warwick, Queensland

Health Professional Meet and Greets

A key feature of our annual engagement program is the Health Professional Meet and Greets. Held across February and March, the events brought together 265 health professionals in Toowoomba, Warwick, Dalby, Goondiwindi, Kingaroy and Ipswich.

The Meet and Greet events provide a valuable opportunity for health professionals to connect with colleagues, share experiences and strengthen local networks.

By fostering collaboration and cross-sector connections, these events help build a more connected and informed healthcare workforce, ultimately supporting better outcomes for communities across the region.

Other events throughout the year were also targeted at practice managers and allied health to ensure the whole spectrum of primary care is connected and supported.

6
Meet and Greet events held across our region

265
Health professionals attended Meet and Greets

Red Ant Round-Up Medical Conference

In November, Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN welcomed more than 30 GPs, practice managers, nurses and specialists to Kingaroy Town Hall for the 2025 Red Ant Round-up Medical Conference — our biennial gathering for health professionals across the South Burnett and beyond.

The day brought together education and connection at a time when both mattered most. Sessions covered women's health, voluntary assisted dying, and the growing role of artificial intelligence in general practice, alongside a timely briefing on Medicare changes taking effect that same weekend, including the new Bulk Billing Practice Incentive Program and updates to Better Access mental health support.

For CEO Lucille Chalmers, the day reflected something the PHN sees as central to its role in the region: "Red Ant Round-up is an opportunity for health professionals to share their experiences and celebrate those delivering healthcare in rural and regional settings. We're grateful for the valuable work health professionals do in caring for the health of communities in our region."

30+
GPs, practice managers, practice nurses and specialists attended the Red Ant Round Up Medical Conference



Red Ant Round-Up Medical Conference - Kingaroy, Queensland

Annual GP Symposia

In partnership with Darling Downs Health and West Moreton Health, the PHN continued to strengthen and support the region's primary healthcare workforce through professional development, peer learning and networking opportunities.

Our annual symposia hosted more than 170 healthcare professionals and over 30 expert speakers from across the region to share knowledge, explore emerging healthcare priorities and strengthen the delivery of patient-centred care.

The programs had a strong focus on practical, real-world application, delegates gained valuable insights into local referral pathways, available services and innovations shaping healthcare delivery. The symposia also provided opportunities to connect with colleagues and local service providers, helping to strengthen relationships and increase awareness of the services available to support patients.

The symposia was well received by attendees, who valued both the quality of the presentations and the opportunity to connect with peers and local providers. One delegate described the event as "informative" and highlighted it as "a great opportunity to network and learn", while another noted that it was "a wonderful local event that provided valuable opportunities to hear from and connect with local health professionals."

These events play an important role in fostering collaboration, building professional connections and supporting a shared commitment to improving health outcomes across our communities.

2
annual GP Symposia held in Toowoomba and Ipswich

34+
keynote speakers

170+
GPs, GP Registrars and Practice Nurses attended the Annual GP Symposia



West Moreton GP Symposium - GP Stream

> "The GP symposium was informative, and the speakers were very interesting and knowledgeable. Today was a great opportunity to network and learn."
>
> — Symposium delegate



West Moreton GP Symposium - Exhibition



Communication and Public Relation Australia's Golden Target Awards - Dr Tanusha Ramaloo and Max Millis

A year of growth for GPs in a Pod

Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN's clinical podcast, GPs in a Pod, is continuing to grow as a valuable resource for GPs and primary care professionals.

The project was developed as a collaboration between the PHN's communications team and West Moreton General Practice Liaison Officer (GPLO) Dr Tanusha Ramaloo as alternative communications channel for reaching our region's busy GPs, fostering further education and clinical discussions.

Since its inception in April 2024, the podcast has continued to build, with over 7,000 streams, over 360 followers, and five-star reviews after more than 60 episodes.

The fortnightly episodes, which are available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Amazon Music, and the PHN's website, are hosted by the PHN's West Moreton GPLO, Dr Tanusha Ramaloo, and Darling Downs GPLO, Dr Jo Pappas.

GPs in a Pod host and West Moreton GPLO, Dr Tanusha Ramaloo, said, "We're really proud of how far the show has come and the growing audience we've built since we first launched."

Late last year, the PHN's podcast was recognised by Communications & Public Relations Australia (CPRA), the leading body for communications and public relations professionals in Australia, at the annual Golden Target Awards in Sydney.

GPs in a Pod was nominated for Health Campaign – Healthcare Professionals, winning gold for the category.

The judges described the entry as "a strong and efficient campaign that demonstrated how a single, clearly defined execution can deliver meaningful outcomes on an almost no-cost budget." It's become an established resource for GPs across the region, with one practitioner saying, "I really learnt a lot and I've been working in this space for six years now! It should be mandatory listening for everyone working with this community."

"The podcast has been a really valuable resource for building my knowledge and confidence around certain topics. I found the episode on eating disorders particularly informative and helpful in understanding eating disorders and the support available, and it gave me greater confidence when making my first referral," said another listening GP.

This year, GPs in a Pod featured a range of guests, with gynaeoncology, eating disorders and homelessness health among the most popular topics.

> "I've heard really positive feedback from listeners about the practical learning and insights they're gaining from experts and local providers across our region.
>
> — Dr Tanusha Ramaloo

Digital health

Digital health remains central to strengthening our primary care system, enabling better health outcomes, improving care coordination, and expanding access to services through technology.

Throughout 2025-26, we continued to build digital capability across the region by embedding digital health into our education, engagement and quality improvement activities. Through targeted training, awareness initiatives and practical support, we helped healthcare providers confidently adopt and use digital health tools to enhance patient care and practice efficiency.

Key areas of focus included telehealth, My Health Record, promotion of the 1800MEDICARE app, medicines safety, cyber security and MyMedicare.



Telehealth

Building on the success of our Connected Care Grants, we continued to support Residential Aged Care Homes (RACHs) with targeted training to equip clinicians with the skills to confidently use the platforms at their disposal as well as enhancing access to My Health Record.

These sessions boosted digital confidence and capability among nurses, GPs, and assistants in nursing, improving the delivery and quality of virtual care and access to key information for aged care residents.

Quality improvement

As part of our broader digital health strategy, 142 general practices participated in the Practice Incentives Program (PIP) Quality Improvement (QI), strengthening the use of clinical data to drive continuous quality improvement. Through improved data sharing and greater adoption of digital health tools, practices enhanced care planning, informed population health insights, and contributed to more targeted service commissioning across the region.

Provider Connect Australia

We continued to support the rollout of Provider Connect Australia (PCA), which is helping primary care providers streamline administrative tasks and improve how key information is shared across services. By updating their details once through PCA, practices were able to securely distribute information to multiple health organisations—reducing duplication and supporting better-connected care.

Medicines safety electronic prescribing and Active Script List

Electronic prescriptions are a paper-free, secure, easy and safe way to manage medications. An Active Script List is consolidated list of a patient's active electronic prescriptions and repeats, eliminating the need to manage individual prescription tokens for each medication.

We worked with healthcare providers to increase awareness and adoption of an Active Script List. Through online training and practical resources, we helped build confidence in these digital solutions, supporting both clinicians and patients to realise the benefits of more connected, efficient and person-centred care.

My Health Record and 1800MEDICARE app

98.9%
of general practices and pharmacies in the region are connected to My Health Record

9.3 million+
documents were uploaded to My Health Record this year

1800MEDICARE app allows individuals to access:

- Information that is available in person's My Health Record.
- Import, view, delete and share an electronic prescription.
- Link, unlink and manage Active Script List.
- Find and book health services - enables individuals to locate their nearest health service in any part of Australia.

Strengthening regional health through data-driven innovation

The refeRHealth data management system has evolved from a mental health reporting platform into a centralised hub for all commissioned service data, driving strategic health planning and improved outcomes for the PHN.

The platform now captures and manages data across a broad range of programs from 38 organisation providers including:

- Mental health
- Homelessness
- After-hours care
- Multicultural access
- Healthy ageing
- Endometriosis and pelvic pain
- Multidisciplinary team initiatives

By providing a centralised source of information, refeRHEALTH enables the PHN to better understand service utilisation, monitor performance and identify emerging community needs.

Data captured through the platform plays a critical role in measuring provider performance against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), monitoring service delivery outcomes, supporting program evaluations and meeting national reporting requirements for the Australian Government Department of Health, Disability and Ageing and internal reporting requirements for the PHN.

Monthly service data from refeRHEALTH is integrated with financial data from Open Windows to deliver a range of dynamic program dashboards that provide insights into service activity, performance and outcomes. These dashboards strengthen contract oversight, streamline reporting and support evidence-based commissioning decisions.

The platform maintains ISO 27001 and ISO 9001 certification, providing assurance that robust information security, quality management and continuous improvement practices underpin the platform's operation.

Our Data System Working Group, comprising the PHN and RHealth representatives, meets monthly to oversee data quality, system development, service performance and reporting requirements.

By transforming service data into actionable insights, refeRHEALTH strengthens understanding of referral pathways, service access and patient outcomes. These insights support more integrated, equitable and place-based models of care, while informing ongoing improvements in service accessibility, cultural safety and responsiveness across the region.



Staying Winter Strong

3,200
resources distributed

2,000
impressions generated across five organic social posts

2,688
views across five newsletter articles with 250+ clicks

Winter is typically a period of increased illness across the Darling Downs and West Moreton regions, with higher rates of respiratory illnesses that can spread quickly through the community, increasing demand for primary care services and emergency departments.

This year we supported the community to stay winter strong by learning more about how to stay safe from serious and highly contagious respiratory illnesses like the flu, COVID-19, RSV and pneumococcal disease.

Winter Strong campaign was developed by the Regional Health Collaborative to promote population health and wellness throughout winter, empower the health workforce to promote winter wellbeing activities, encourage appropriate care-seeking, and help ease pressure on the health system.

Targeted messaging was delivered for priority audiences, including older people and people with medical risk factors, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, the healthcare workforce, pregnant women, and parents and carers of children aged six months to five years.

We know that getting vaccinated against these illnesses can help protect you and reduce your risk of serious illness and ending up in hospital.

The campaign was aligned with rollout of the Queensland Government's 2026 Free Flu vaccinations program, which provided free flu vaccines for Queenslanders aged six months and older.

Through a coordinated digital and GP-led communications approach, Winter Strong supported the community to find vaccination providers from their local GPs, pharmacies, community health clinics, Aboriginal Medical Practices, residential aged care homes, and more.

The campaign directed community members to ddwmphn.com.au/findtherightcare - the PHN's website for guidance on local care options.

The campaign also encouraged people with non-life-threatening conditions to visit a Medicare Urgent Care Clinic instead of the Emergency Department and shared practical health tips, such as washing their hands and staying home when unwell.

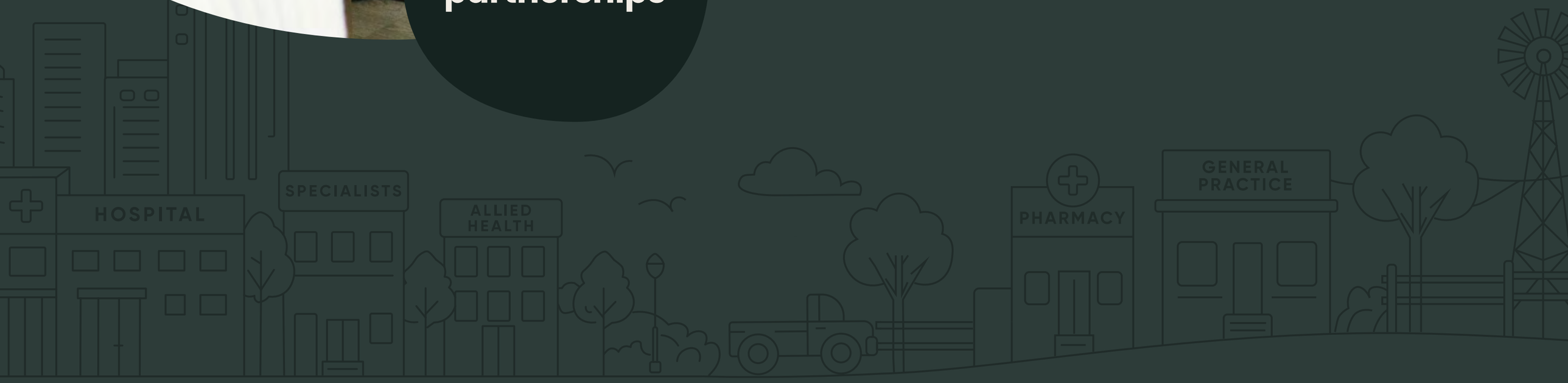


Winter Strong campaign resources



Collaborating effectively,
with a **one system mindset.**

Healthy partnerships



Working in partnership

As a health commissioning organisation, we are committed to ensuring that the voices of our communities shape the design, delivery and continuous improvement of the services they use. Through direct consultation, community-led discussions, our TALK-ABOUT program and Your Experience of Service (YES) surveys, we strengthen our understanding of local needs and support evidence-informed commissioning decisions.

We work closely with primary care providers, service providers, and our partners across the health and social sectors to ensure we deliver maximum impact with limited resources. In today's complex health environment, we recognise that lasting and meaningful progress can only be achieved through strong partnerships and shared responsibility.

Collaboration is embedded across all areas of our work—including commissioning planning and decision making, primary care support and integration programs, and networks focused on targeted specific place-based issues, such as Thriving Lockyer Kids and the Older Persons Health Collaboratives.

Through these partnerships, we ensure our planning and commissioning activities remain responsive to local priorities and contribute to a more connected health system that delivers the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

Our approach is grounded in meaningful engagement with consumers, communities and service providers. By listening to people with lived experience and fostering trusted partnerships across the health sector, we gain valuable insights into the opportunities, challenges and experiences that shape health outcomes across our region.



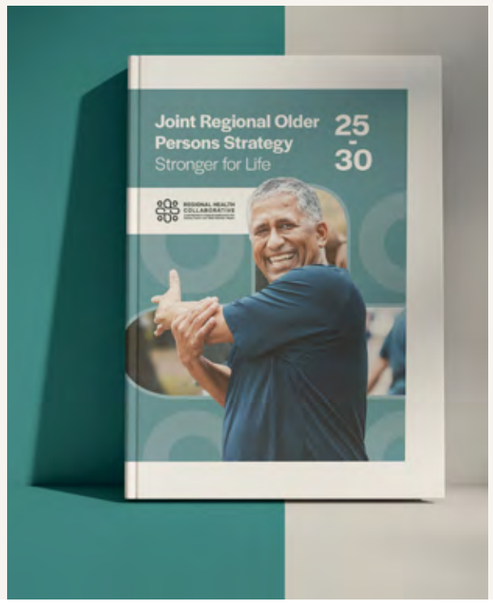
Joint Regional Older Persons Strategy 2025-2030 launch

Joint Regional Older Persons Strategy 2025 - 2030

In November 2025, we launched the Joint Regional Older Persons Strategy 2025-2030: Stronger for Life, in partnership with the Regional Health Collaborative.

The implementation of this Strategy is underpinned by a strong governance structure that connects place-based collaboratives, working groups, and Regional Health Collaborative oversight to ensure strong stewardship and accountability over the implementation of this Strategy.

With an ageing population and increasingly complex care needs, Stronger for Life focuses on better-coordinated transitions and timely access to services closer to home — supporting the wellbeing and dignity of older people, while easing pressure on their caregivers and families. Informed by the voices of older people and carers, this strategy takes a place-based, person-centred approach focused on themes of choice, independence and dignity.





Early Years and Young Persons' Health Strategy 2025 - 2028

The Early Years and Young Persons' Health Strategy 2025–2028 reflects our commitment to giving every child and young person across the Darling Downs and West Moreton region the strongest possible start to life.

Developed in partnership with health, education and community stakeholders, the strategy is informed by the voices of families and young people, who identified the need for more connected care, easier access to services, stronger local support and earlier intervention.

Together, we are building a more coordinated and equitable system that supports children and young people to thrive, now and into the future.

Key partnerships

West Moreton Health

We have a formalised agreement with West Moreton Health and work together regularly across a range of local initiatives.
Key areas of collaboration include:

- Healthy Minds, Healthy Lives
- West Moreton Care Collaboratives.

Darling Downs Health

Covering a large and diverse rural region, the PHN and Darling Downs Health work closely together to support equitable access to high-quality healthcare for communities across the region. Our joint initiatives include:

- Healthy Minds, Healthy Lives
- Darling Downs Care Collaboratives
- Macintyre Health Alliance
- Cherbourg Health Council
- Rural health workforce initiatives.

Macintyre Health Alliance

The Macintyre Health Alliance is a collaboration between Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN, Goondiwindi Medical Centre, Darling Downs Health, Pius X Aboriginal Medical Service, Hunter New England Central Coast PHN and the Hunter New England Local Health District.

It was formed to make recommendations on the delivery of health services within the Toomelah, Boggabilla and Goondiwindi region, and advocate for improved health services and outcomes for the people living in these communities.

Within the model, care will be delivered through a connected network of primary care services to the closest primary care hub and beyond to support underserviced rural communities with Indigenous populations. The care model will include the use of a sophisticated telehealth cart system with diagnostic peripheral tools, enhanced digital satellite connectivity, and remote support from a multidisciplinary team of GPs, allied health and specialists.

Darling Downs Care at the End-of-Life Collaborative

The Darling Downs Care at the End-of-Life Collaborative has been established to improve the provision of palliative care and end of life services for residents in the Darling Downs region with a focus on greater choice of quality, appropriate at home services.

West Moreton Care Collaborative

The West Moreton Care Collaboratives (WMCC) comprise of members from West Moreton Health, peak bodies, private and community organisations.

WMCC encompasses the Care at End-of-Life Collaborative and the Older Persons Care Collaborative. The Care at the End-of-Life Collaborative is aligned with the Greater Choices for at Home Palliative Care objectives and has developed a 2024-2027 Action Plan to address the needs of the local community. As a collective, the WMCC are auspiced under the governance of University of Southern Queensland.

Healthy Minds, Healthy Lives

The challenges our community and our health system have faced over the past few years are considerable and the impact on our collective mental health and wellbeing has been significant.

To make a difference, we need to work together. 'Healthy Minds, Healthy Lives' is our comprehensive Joint Regional Mental Health, Suicide Prevention and Alcohol and Other Drug Plan.

Healthy Minds, Healthy Lives continues to lay the foundation to enable all people living in the Darling Downs and West Moreton region to access the services and support that they need for mental health, suicide prevention, and alcohol and other drugs treatment.

Regional Health Collaborative

Now in its second year of operation, the Regional Health Collaborative (RHC) brings together Darling Downs Health, West Moreton Health, Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN, Health Consumers Queensland, Queensland Ambulance Service, and the region's five Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations: Goolburri, Goondir, Kambu, Carbal and Cherbourg Regional Aboriginal and Islander Community Controlled Health Services.

Through a strong governance framework, the RHC fosters meaningful collaboration, enabling members to address complex, system-wide challenges and advance shared health priorities that no single organisation can achieve alone.

This year, second-tier governance arrangements were established to strengthen collective action on shared priorities.

Drawing on shared health intelligence, the RHC implemented a Urinary Tract Infection (UTI) model across Darling Downs and West Moreton to improve care coordination in primary care and Residential Aged Care Homes (RACHs), reducing avoidable hospitalisations.

The whole-of-system model supports older people through workforce education, care planning, escalation pathways, and partnerships with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, RACHs and general practice.

The RHC also facilitated a coordinated approach to winter surge planning across the region, identifying opportunities to strengthen service integration and inform a more proactive and sustainable winter surge strategy for 2027.



Regional Health Collaborative

Community Advisory Committees

The role of the Community Advisory Committees is to provide the community perspective to PHN Boards to ensure that decisions, investments, and innovations are patient centred, cost effective locally relevant and aligned to local care experiences and expectations.

PHNs are expected to ensure that Community Advisory Committee members have the necessary skills to participate in a committee environment and are representative of the PHN. To meet this requirement, we have two Community Advisory Committees in place; one in West Moreton and one in Darling Downs.

Our Community Advisory Committee Darling Downs members are:

- Elizabeth Adams: Darling Downs Chair (until January 2026)
- Cheryl Dalton – Chair (from January 2026)
- Julie Rainbow
- Larissa Sands
- Sharon Boyce
- Deborah Stevens
- Kathy Payne
- Shiny Varghese.

Our Community Advisory Committee West Moreton members are:

- Professor Lauren Ball: West Moreton Chair (until January 2026)
- Deanne Minniecon - Chair (from January 2026)
- Alan Knight
- Nicole Vine
- Ratu Maseinawa
- Shawn Phua
- Kate Kunzelmann
- Courtney Strow
- Leonie Short
- Simone Karandrews.



Joint Community Advisory Committee - Brookwater, Queensland

Clinical Council

Annual Report 2024 - 2025 Healthy partnerships Annual Report 2024 - 2025 Clinical Council The Clinical Council plays an important role in providing advice on locally relevant clinical matters.

With the Federal Government focus on primary care, including the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce and the Ten-Year Primary Care Plan, the Clinical Council supports collaboration as well as advocate, promote and encourage engagement across the healthcare system.

Our current council is made up of six West Moreton and six Darling Downs representatives which includes:

- four doctors
- one practice manager
- four allied health
- one registered nurse
- one Director Indigenous Health
- one GM Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation
- one representative each from West Moreton Health and Darling Downs Health.

Our Clinical Council members are:

- Dr Tony Bayliss: PHN Chair and GP (Chair until January 2026)
- Dr Rachael Gray - Clinical Council Chair, Board Director and GP (Chair from May 2026)
- Tamika Campbell: Deputy CEO - Carbal
- Dene Creegan: Practice Manager
- Dr Meech Freeman: A/Clinical Director Rural Health – West Moreton Health
- Dadirai Gara: Psychologist
- Simone Karandrews: Sonographer and Community Advisory Council Representative
- Rica Lacey: Director Indigenous Health – Darling Downs Health
- Wendy Owen: Speech Pathologist (stepped down February 2026)
- Judith Pasco (France): Podiatrist (stepped down February 2026)
- Dr Vishwas Raghunath: Nephrologist/Obstetric Physician
- Elise Stevenson: Registered Nurse
- Dr Tanusha Ramaloo: Ex officio
- Dr Joanna Pappas: Ex officio.

Talk About

Launched in early 2020 by our PHN, the TALK ABOUT campaign was developed to integrate consumer voices into the health commissioning process through quarterly, topic-based engagement.

Each topic is composed of locally facilitated Community Led Discussions and an online survey that provides respondents with helpful resources and links upon completion. This approach ensures we hear from people in priority populations who may face barriers to participation, such as cost of travel, digital exclusion, or accessibility needs.

TALK ABOUT insights are included into our Health Needs Assessment and are shared in a 'What We Heard' flyer.

By capturing authentic community perspectives and publicly sharing the findings, the TALK ABOUT campaign engages, educates and encourages ongoing connection between the PHN, healthcare providers and community.

In doing so, the PHN has built social license for expanded engagement activities and is supporting other PHNs in localising similar engagement campaigns across the country.

Learn more:
Visit: *ddwmphn.com.au/Talk-About*

This year we talked about:

Women's Health

(From 8 October until 30 October 2025)

We received 250 responses from...

145 community members

42 health professionals

63 community participants in Kitchen Table Discussions

3 out of **4** community members had seen a GP or health professional for women's health symptoms/conditions in the last 12 months.

The top health worries were:

- physical health and weight management
- perimenopause and menopause symptoms
- mental health and wellbeing.

Death and dying

(From 26 April to 4 May 2026)

We received 94 responses from...

39 community members

10 health professionals

45 community participants in Kitchen Table Discussions

People mentioned what they thought worked well...

- Palliative and clinical care support
- Choice, wishes and person-centred care were respected

People would like to see more...

- Better guidance, and greater awareness of available services and supports
- Better access to palliative and end-of-life healthcare services.

Spreading the word

This year our communications and engagement activities kept our providers and community members connected and informed.

6 media releases

19 media mentions

360 followers GPs in a Pod (+103)

7,450 listens (+4,877)

2,252 Facebook followers (+164)

2,073 LinkedIn followers (+298)

3,000 email subscribers

84,473 emails delivered – Emails comprising of information about services, general practice support, education and helpful updates about system changes (+4,837)

156,447 page views (+21,881) across our website

1,502 page views for 'Find the right care' – This webpage helps the community navigate through care options available locally, so they can select the right care at the right timez

71 users of the new Registrar Hub – supporting new registrars to the region to access key contacts, referral pathways, local services, professional development opportunities, and resources

1,015 users accessed the GP Portal for information and resources for local GPs and general practice staff

1,018 users visited the Services Library webpage to find commissioned services and programs in our region



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