



BALANCE

North West Hospital and Health Service
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WINTER EDITION



Acknowledgement of traditional custodians

The North West Hospital and Health Service respectfully acknowledges the Elders past and present and the Traditional Owners of the land, sea and waterways which we service and declare the North West Hospital and Health Service's commitment to reducing inequalities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous health outcomes in line with the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (Closing the Gap).

Acknowledgement of Australian South Sea Islanders

North West Hospital and Health Service formally recognises the Australian South Sea Islanders as a distinct cultural group within our geographical boundaries. The North West Hospital and Health Service is committed to fulfilling the Queensland Government Recognition Statement for Australian South Sea Islander Community to ensure that present and future generations of Australian South Sea Islanders have equality of opportunity to participate in and contribute to the economic, social, political and cultural life of the State

Vision, Purpose, Values

Our Vision

Trusted, connected, quality healthcare for all.

Our Purpose

To provide kind, inclusive and safe health services across our region in partnership with the communities we serve.

Our Values

Our values will guide our decision making and actions as we commit to respecting, protecting, and promoting human rights in our decision making and actions. These values include Innovation, Respect, Engagement, Accountability, Caring, and Honesty.



This newsletter is produced by the North West Hospital and Health Service.
All feedback and contributions are welcome to NWHHS_Communication@health.qld.gov.au.
All published material has been approved by the Health Service Chief Executive.

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From the Board Chair Tanya Arnold



Dear North West,

As we move through our first few months as the newly appointed North West Hospital and Health Service Board, I have been fortunate to meet with staff, clinicians, community members and stakeholders across our region. A particular highlight was welcoming our new Board members through a Welcome to Country and Smoking Ceremony at Mount Isa Hospital, providing an opportunity to reflect on the importance of cultural respect, connection and reconciliation in everything we do.

Board members have also participated in a range of engagement activities, including meeting with intern doctors, intern pharmacists, and graduate nurses and midwives. These conversations provide valuable insight into the experiences of our emerging health professionals and reinforce the importance of supporting the next generation of our healthcare workforce in the North West.

In May, I joined Health Service Chief Executive Andrew Quabba in Karumba to attend the North West Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (NWQROC) General Meeting. The opportunity to engage directly with local government leaders reinforced the value of strong partnerships in improving health outcomes for our communities. While in the Gulf, we also visited Normanton Hospital, where we met with local staff to discuss community priorities, challenges and opportunities. We were also pleased to welcome Queensland Health Director-General Dr David Rosengren to Mount Isa and Cloncurry, providing an opportunity to showcase the outstanding work being undertaken across our health service.

The Board was also delighted to announce the appointment of Andrew Quabba as Health Service Chief Executive. Andrew's journey within our organisation reflects the strength of local leadership, and his deep understanding of our communities places him in an excellent position to lead North West Hospital and Health Service into the future.

As Board Chair, I continue to be impressed by the professionalism, passion and resilience of our staff. On behalf of the Board, thank you for the important role you play in caring for our communities and strengthening the health and wellbeing of the North West.

With winter now upon us, the North West's social calendar is in full swing. Across the region, communities are coming together for local events and celebrations that showcase the unique spirit of the North West. I encourage everyone to get involved, support local events and enjoy the season with family and friends. These moments of connection and community spirit are what make the North West such a wonderful place to live and work.

Kind regards,
Tanya Arnold
Health Service Board Chair



NWHHS Balance

From the Health Service Chief Executive Andrew Quabba

It's hard to believe we're already halfway through 2026. The year is certainly flying by, and across North West Hospital and Health Service it has already been filled with achievements, challenges and plenty of reasons to celebrate.

This edition also marks a personal milestone, following my recent appointment as Chief Executive. Having spent the year working alongside our staff in the acting role, I'm honoured to continue leading a health service filled with passionate people who care deeply about our communities.



Inside these pages you'll meet some of those people. From celebrating our nurses, midwives and administrative professionals, to showcasing teams strengthening specialist services, supporting our communities and building meaningful partnerships, this edition reflects the dedication that exists across every corner of the North West.

You'll also read about the important role our communities play in shaping healthcare. Through our Consumer Advisory Groups and committees, local voices continue to influence how we improve services and plan for the future, ensuring the people we care for remain at the centre of everything we do.

As we head into the second half of the year, there is plenty to look forward to. Together, we'll continue strengthening services, supporting our workforce and delivering high-quality healthcare for communities across the North West.

Thank you to our staff, volunteers, consumers and community partners for everything you do. Your commitment is what makes our health service such a special place.

I hope you enjoy this edition of Balance.

Warm regards,

Andrew Quabba
Health Service Chief Executive
North West Hospital and Health Service

Strategic Plan 2024–2028



Our Vision

Trusted, connected,
quality healthcare for all



Our Purpose

To provide kind, inclusive and safe health services across our region
in partnership with the communities we serve



Focusing on Health

Ensuring the right care, right place, right time

- Understand the health needs of our communities, review services with our partners and provide the right care, right place, right time
- Improve performance and delivery under the Clinical Services Plan

Talking about and managing your healthcare

- Listen to the voices of residents to improve our models of care
- With our partners, support education, health conversations, prevention, and early detection of healthcare issues
- Improve health literacy

Focusing on First Nations

Increase health equity and parity of life expectancy by 2031

- Implement our first Health Equity Strategy
- Support the delivery of appropriate health services with local leaders
- Reduce preventable hospitalisations through innovative solutions that improve health outcomes

Strengthen relationships with communities

- Build strong relationships with communities through a healing and truth-telling approach

Support First Nations workforce

- Work with First Nations staff to increase our First Nations workforce and promote career opportunities

Focusing on Improvement

Deliver our services efficiently

- Work towards a more networked culture of innovation and continual improvement
- Provide safe and high-quality services and promote practices that improve health outcomes

Innovation

- Improve access to data and information
- Maximise performance through better monitoring and analytics
- Continue embedding and integrating research, data and insights to improve our services

Technology

- Work towards implementing electronic health records
- Uplift connectivity to provide equity of access to technology

Financial integrity and sustainability

- With a focus on enhancing healthcare outcomes, ensure healthcare delivery is aligned with our available resources
- Embed environmentally friendly practices to support better environmental sustainability

Measures of success

Exceeded or met targets for emergency and planned care

Achievement of NWHHS Clinical Services Plan directives

Increased patient reported outcome measures

Increased engagement and consumer/community voice representation

Measures of success

Implemented NWHHS Health Equity Strategy

Strengthened relationships with community and local leaders

Reduced rates of preventable hospitalisations

Measures of success

Improved and maintained patient safety and quality measures

Improved health outcomes in our communities

Increased embedding of data analytics and data insights

Achievement of a balanced budget with maximised own source revenue

Improved capital maintenance and delivery

Increased equity in access to digital healthcare and health technologies

Our Strategic Objectives

Work with our communities

- With community leaders and local Elders, engage, consult and collaborate in healthcare planning and delivery
- Strengthen how we work with our partners in primary care to promote preventative health initiatives
- Develop effective relationships and effectively draw on the skills of partners
- Promote the role of Mount Isa Hospital in collaboration with the James Cook University (JCU) Centre for Rural and Remote Health (CRH) as a centre of excellence in rural and remote health

Improve the patient experience across our health services

- Support the development of simple experience maps or navigation tools through the main healthcare pathways
- Improve referral and healthcare delivery pathways, including how we communicate safety across boundaries

Improve better ways to share data and to communicate

- Improve data sharing and information flow with our partners to improve technologies that better support the patient experience
- Partner with stakeholders, including eHealth Queensland, to implement innovative technology use in remote communities



Our Values

Guide our decision-making and actions



Focusing on Valuing and Growing our People

Support, develop and value our workplace culture

- Demonstrate our values in our behaviours and professional conduct
- Recognise and celebrate contributions and success
- Create an environment that supports the health and wellbeing of staff
- Promote professional and leadership development in a supportive environment

Grow our workforce

- Pursue innovative recruitment and retention strategies
- Collaborate with schools, universities and agencies to develop employment pathway opportunities
- Enable flexibility with our staff to ensure the best workforce possible

Increase our First Nations workforce

- Continue to implement the North West HHS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2019–2026

Measures of success

Improved cultural and staff wellbeing indicators

Increased clinician-led healthcare improvement initiatives

Improved staff retention rates and employment/development pathways

Increased Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples workforce engagement

Aligned workforce rates to community requirements

Pathways to better health for our North West communities

We acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples as traditional custodians of the land, waters and rivers on which we live and work. We pay our respects to the ancient wisdom of Elders who came before us and to those who are leading the way now.

We commit to improving our communities' access to healthcare and health outcomes, increasing health equity and parity of life expectancy for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and building our workforce to reflect our communities.

Our Alignment to The Queensland Government Objectives for the Community

North West Hospital and Health Service supports the Government's objectives for the community.



Health services when you need them

Restoring health services when Queenslanders need them most through transparent and targeted investment with real-time data, boosting frontline health services, driving resources where they're needed most, improving our EDs, reopening regional maternity wards, fast-tracking access to elective surgeries, and helping patients to be seen faster.

This strategic plan outlines how the North West Hospital and Health Service will contribute to this objective.

Our Strategic Challenges

Fit-for-purpose Business Systems

Ensuring our systems, data and infrastructure enable ongoing improvements/innovation in care delivery.

Disrupted Finance and Funding Models

The complexities of state and federal funding models may disrupt our strategic goals of delivering committed, connected care close to home.

Health Equity amongst our First Nations peoples

The remote nature of our work, and the access challenges our geography brings puts achieving genuine health equity at risk. Failure to walk this path with our First Nations people could undermine achieving our shared goal of health equity across our region.

Sustainable Health Workforce

Our remote location, employment competition and high workforce turnover could reduce our capacity to maintain safe, high quality, culturally respectful services. Partnering will be essential, however, we cannot control delivery the capacity of our partners.

Security of Technology

Cyber threats and connectivity risks pose potential harm to patient data and operational integrity. Robust safeguards are essential for a resilient healthcare system.

Investment in Mental Health Services

The growing need for mental healthcare across the state and our region requires additional investment in these services.

Our Strategic Opportunities

To increase the capacity of local healthcare services to meet the needs of all of our residents, we will ensure that challenges to our objectives are met with solutions

- Focus on preventative health and health promotion in our region to improve health outcomes.

- Action the Health Equity reform agenda specifically with First Nations peoples.

- Expand the use of technology and harness innovation to enable easy and safe access to healthcare in our settings or closer to home.

- Prioritise staff retention and development while optimising approaches to attract the right people with the right skills to the right roles.

- Mentor and grow our First Nations workforce to strengthen, support and promote career/development opportunities.

- Partner with our diverse communities to understand and overcome social, economic and geographical barriers to healthcare.

- Invest in how we focus on growing our leadership culture and core structure.

A Snapshot of Our Region 2024



We deliver healthcare across a geographical area of 300,000 kilometres, an equivalent of 16% of Queensland's land area, covering a remote outback region stretching across northwestern Queensland and the Gulf of Carpentaria.

We serve a resident population of around 29,000 people that significantly increases with visitors and tourists annually.

We provide health services across 11 sites in the North West, including the Mount Isa Hospital, a Level 4 Specialist Service Base Hospital, two multi-purpose health services that include residential aged care, three remote hospitals, and five primary health clinics.

Our health service includes several remote and discrete Aboriginal communities and has one of the highest proportions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations in Queensland.

17.62% of our population live in some of the most socio-economically disadvantaged regions in Queensland

31.8% of our population identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander

45.4% of our total population are aged between 15 and 44 years

41% of all births within the NWHHS were First Nations births

25% of First Nations residents living in the Gulf and Lower Gulf reside in multiple family households

Community News

AUSTRALIA'S BIGGEST MORNING TEA

The annual *Biggest Morning Tea* saw staff, volunteers, local businesses and community supporters contribute an impressive spread of homemade treats, raffle prizes and generous donations, creating a morning that was as much about connection as it was fundraising.

Organised by Janelle Stuart-Russell and Dr TK, the event attracted strong support from across the health service and wider community. Dr TK even volunteered straight after completing a night shift, helping ensure the morning ran smoothly from start to finish. In total, the team managed to raise \$4271 for a great cause.

A dedicated team of volunteers, including Jordan Staggs, Kyron King, Eddie Sheppard, Nate Robinson, Ade George, Lea Sheltens and Kerry Morgan, helped coordinate the

event, while the Cancer Care team provided invaluable support throughout the morning.

Local businesses also rallied behind the cause, generously donating raffle prizes and refreshments. Grants Bakery, SportsPower, Bunnings, Coles, Woolworths, Salon Bronze and Isa Donuts all contributed to the event's success.

Community support extended even further, with Ciara McEvoy from Glencore, Paul Fletcher from Isa Kitchens, RFDS Flight Nurse Dempsey Carr and SES and RFDS volunteer Don Bowley lending a hand on the day.

Among the raffle prizes was a stunning photographic print donated by Nurse Practitioner Liz Kennedy, while one of our patients generously contributed a handmade painting, adding a special personal touch to the fundraising efforts.



Jordan Staggs, Janelle Stuart-Russell, Dr TK

North West Hospital and Health Service would like to thank everyone who baked, donated, volunteered, attended or purchased raffle tickets. Together, our staff and community once again demonstrated the generosity and spirit that make the North West such a special place.



STANDING TOGETHER AGAINST DOMESTIC AND FAMILY VIOLENCE

Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month

Community members, service providers and advocates came together in Mount Isa during Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Month to reaffirm a simple but powerful message: everyone deserves to feel safe.

While domestic and family violence often occurs behind closed doors, its impacts are felt throughout our communities. It affects people from all walks of life and can have lasting effects on victim-survivors, children, families and support networks.

For the Family Advocacy Unit, the rally was an opportunity to acknowledge those who have experienced violence, recognise the work of frontline support services and encourage conversations about prevention, respect and safety.

An important focus of this year's event was the impact domestic and family violence can have on children and young people. Creating safe, respectful environments for children helps build stronger families and healthier communities for future generations.

Preventing domestic and family violence is not the responsibility of any one organisation or profession. It requires communities working together to challenge harmful behaviours, support those experiencing violence and promote respectful relationships.

Whether as a parent, teacher, coach, employer, elder, neighbour or friend, every person has a role to play in creating communities where respect is the standard and violence is never accepted.

If you or someone you know is experiencing domestic and family violence, support is available. Contact DVConnect on 1800 811 811, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

- **1 in 4 women and 1 in 14 men have experienced violence from an intimate partner since the age of 15.**
- **Almost 9 in 10 hospitalisations for assault by a partner involve women.**
- **13% of Australian adults witnessed violence against a parent before they turned 15. That's 2.6 million adults.**



DIPHTHERIA

STAY INFORMED
STAY PROTECTED



WHAT IS DIPHTHERIA?

Diphtheria is a serious infection with toxic bacteria that can affect the throat, nose or skin.

It spreads through respiratory droplets from coughing or sneezing and through close contact with infected people.

It can be life-threatening if left untreated.



SYMPTOMS

Respiratory (throat, nose)

- Sore throat
- Fever
- Swollen neck glands
- difficulty swallowing or breathing

Skin

- Chronic sores or sores that won't heal
- ulcers
- Wounds covered by grey membrane



IMMUNISATION IS THE BEST PREVENTION

Check that you and your family are up to date with diphtheria immunisations. Immunisation is the most important way to prevent severe diphtheria symptoms.



Healthcare workers:

A booster is recommended if it has been more than 5 years since your last immunisation.

WHAT CAN YOU DO



Stay home if unwell



Cover coughs and sneezes



Wash hands regularly



Keep wounds clean and covered



Avoid sharing items

NEED ADVICE?

Contact your local GP, health service, or healthcare provider



For more information about this outbreak, visit the Australian Centre for Disease Control webpage.

GETTING TO THE HEART OF IT

National Palliative Care Week – May 10 to May 16

North West Hospital and Health Service's Palliative Care Team marked National Palliative Care Week by bringing people together at a community barbecue in Mount Isa, creating a welcoming space for staff, patients, and community members to connect.

The event reflected this year's theme, *Getting to the Heart of It*, which encourages open conversations about what matters most to people as they navigate serious illness, ageing and end-of-life care.



While Palliative Care Week shines a spotlight on these important discussions, the work of the Palliative Care Team continues all year round.

Earlier this year, the team supported Advance Care Planning Week, helping community members understand that planning ahead is about more than completing documents. It is an opportunity for people to record their wishes and preferences, ensuring their voice remains at the centre of their care.



The team has also been developing skills in creating patient biographies, learning about the people behind the patient. Favourite songs, treasured family memories, proud life achievements and personal stories all help clinicians deliver care that is individual, respectful and meaningful.

The BBQ provided another opportunity to foster connections with community members while enjoying conversation and activities. Balloon animal making proved particularly popular, while one enthusiastic four-legged visitor popped over to see what smelt so good.



National Palliative Care Week

Throughout the week, the team also hosted an information booth in the Mount Isa Hospital foyer, providing information about palliative care services and inviting community members to take part in a heart-sewing activity symbolising connection, care and compassion.

For the Community Palliative Care Team, National Palliative Care Week is ultimately about people — supporting individuals and families, encouraging meaningful conversations and ensuring care remains focused on what matters most.

Community members interested in learning more about palliative care services or advance care planning can contact the team on 07 4764 1552.





Significant progress has been made in the current financial year to improve the Advanced Care Planning rates. There has been a 300% improvement on the previous financial year, with more First Nations patients being followed up than over the previous 2 financial years.

Advanced Care Planning	First Nations	Non First Nations
FY 2023-24	40	146
FY 2024-25	43	45
FYTD 2025-26	162	220

Figures listed are from Mount Isa



HEART WEEK

May 4 to May 10

Heart disease remains one of Australia's leading causes of death, affecting hundreds of thousands of people across the country. While many risk factors can develop silently over time, small lifestyle changes and regular health checks can make a significant difference.

To mark Heart Week, North West Hospital and Health Service staff and visitors were invited to visit an information booth in the Mount Isa Hospital foyer, where Cardiac Nurse Kim Beerman shared practical advice on heart health and provided blood pressure checks.

The event encouraged people to better understand their cardiovascular health and the simple steps they can take to reduce their risk of heart disease.

For many Australians, conditions such as high blood pressure and high cholesterol can go unnoticed for years without obvious

symptoms. Regular health checks can help identify these risk factors early and support timely intervention.

Heart Week also highlighted the importance of everyday habits that contribute to better heart health, including regular physical activity, healthy eating, maintaining a healthy weight, managing stress and avoiding smoking.

By encouraging people to take a proactive approach to their health, Heart Week served as a reminder that looking after your heart does not always require major changes. Often, the most important step is simply starting the conversation and booking a health check.

The NWHHS Cardiac Team continues to support patients across the region through education, assessment and specialist cardiac care, helping people make informed decisions about their heart health.





*“Winter. Slow
mornings. Snug
evenings. No need to
rush. Woolly hats.
Leather gloves rescue
frostbitten hands.
Zero qualms about
nights in with no
plans!”*

Lydia Millen

Staff stories

INTERNATIONAL NURSES AND MIDWIVES DAY

International Day of the Midwife and International Nurses Day provided an opportunity to recognise the dedication of nurses and midwives working across the North West.



NWHHS 2026 Nurse of the Year, Yazan Hedeq

From bustling hospital wards to remote community clinics, nurses and midwives play a vital role in delivering healthcare across the region.

This year, North West Hospital and Health Service celebrated International Day of the Midwife and International Nurses Day with an event recognising the remarkable contribution these professionals make to patients, families and communities every day.

Throughout the North West, nurses and midwives are often present during some of

life's most significant moments. They welcome new babies into the world, provide care during illness and recovery, support people through challenging diagnoses and help families navigate end-of-life care.

The celebration included a moving address from First Nations nurse, midwife and child health nurse Dana, who reflected on the importance of connection, culture and compassionate care in supporting communities across the region.

The event also recognised several outstanding clinicians through the 2026 Nursing and Midwifery Awards.

Staff stories

INTERNATIONAL NURSES AND MIDWIVES DAY

This year's recipients were:

Nurse of the Year
Yazan Hedeq

FYP Nurse/Midwife of the Year
Emily Monks

FYP Support Person of the Year
Kaitlyn Hoffman

Remote Nurse of the Year
Isaac Soper

Midwife of the Year
Natalya Donohue



With 56 nominations received across the award categories, the program highlighted the breadth of talent, commitment and leadership found throughout the North West workforce.

While only a handful of individuals could take home awards, the nominations reflected the deep appreciation colleagues hold for one another and the extraordinary work taking place every day across hospitals, health centres and community services.

North West Hospital and Health Service extends its congratulations to all nominees and award recipients, and thanks every nurse and midwife for the care, expertise and dedication they bring to their roles each day.



BEHIND THE SCENES

Administrative Professionals Day recognised the people whose organisation, dedication and problem-solving keep healthcare running every day across the North West.



NWHHS 2026 Admin of the year, Sara Pengo

To mark Administrative Professionals Day, North West Hospital and Health Service recognised the invaluable contribution of administrative staff working across hospitals, community health services and corporate teams throughout the region.

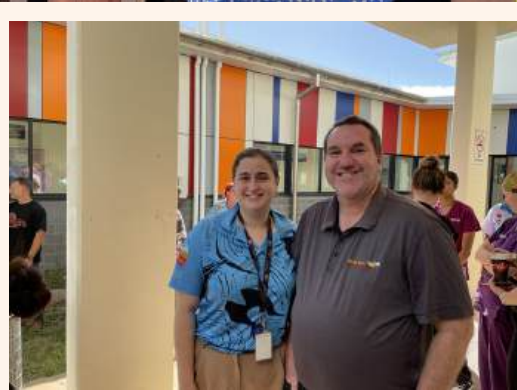
Administrative professionals are often the first point of contact for patients and visitors, providing reassurance, guidance and support while also managing the countless behind-the-scenes tasks that keep services operating efficiently.

From finance and human resources to communications, information technology, medical records and frontline administration, these teams play an essential role in supporting clinicians and delivering quality care to communities across the North West.

The occasion also celebrated the 2026 Administrative Professional of the Year, Sara Pengo, whose commitment and professionalism earned recognition from colleagues. Sara's contribution was acknowledged alongside the many dedicated administrative staff working across the health service.

Administrative Professionals Day served as an opportunity to thank every member of the administrative workforce for the expertise, adaptability and care they bring to their roles.

While their work often happens behind the scenes, its impact is seen every day in the experiences of patients, staff and communities across the North West.



STRONGER RENAL CARE, RIGHT HERE IN THE NORTH WEST

By investing in local nurses, North West Hospital and Health Service is strengthening renal care across the region and helping more patients access treatment closer to home.

Providing specialised renal care in rural and remote Queensland relies on skilled clinicians with the confidence and expertise to deliver complex care where it is needed most.

Through a collaboration between NWHHS, Townsville Hospital and Health Service and Metro South Hospital and Health Service, six Mount Isa-based nurses recently completed advanced haemodialysis training in tertiary hospitals, including Princess Alexandra Hospital and Townsville University Hospital.

The six-week placements provided hands-on

experience in high-acuity renal units, where nurses worked alongside multidisciplinary teams and gained valuable skills in managing dialysis treatment and responding to complex clinical situations.

Once back in Mount Isa, the nurses apply their new knowledge in both hospital-based renal services and outreach programs supporting patients in remote communities. This helps ensure people living across the North West can access high-quality, life-sustaining dialysis care closer to home whenever possible.

By investing in local capability today, North West Hospital and Health Service is building a stronger, more resilient renal service for the future—one that supports both its workforce and the communities who rely on it.



WELCOMING NEW BOARD MEMBERS

North West Hospital and Health Service's new Board began its journey with a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony



North West Hospital and Health Service's new Board officially commenced its tenure with a Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony, marking the beginning of their journey with the organisation.

Hosted by the Kalkadoon PBC, the ceremony welcomed Board members to Country and recognised the enduring cultural connection of the Traditional Owners to the land on which they will serve.

The meaningful ceremony set the tone for the Board's first week, highlighting the importance of respect, partnership and listening as they begin working alongside staff, patients and communities across the North West.





Following the Welcome to Country, Board members participated in a comprehensive orientation program, meeting with teams from across the health service and learning more about the diverse services delivered throughout the region.

The orientation provided valuable insight into the opportunities and challenges of delivering healthcare across one of Queensland's largest and most geographically diverse health service areas.

NWHHS extends its sincere thanks to the Kalkadoon PBC for sharing such a meaningful Welcome to Country and smoking ceremony to begin this new chapter.



As they begin their term, the Board is looking forward to visiting communities across the North West, meeting staff and consumers, and building strong relationships with the people they serve.



ANZAC DAY CELEBRATIONS

Cloncurry nurses joined the local community to commemorate ANZAC Day, honouring the service and sacrifice of those who have served Australia.



Nurses from Cloncurry Multipurpose Health Service proudly joined the community for this year's ANZAC Day commemorations, taking part in the town's annual parade alongside local organisations and community groups.

The service brought together residents of all ages to reflect on the courage, sacrifice and enduring legacy of Australian and New Zealand servicemen and women.

For healthcare staff, participating in ANZAC Day was an opportunity to stand alongside the community they care for every day, recognising the importance of remembrance and shared respect.

North West Hospital and Health Service thanks the Cloncurry team for representing the organisation with pride and joining the community in commemorating those whose service and sacrifice continue to shape our nation.

Lest we forget



CRAZY SOCKS 4 DOCS DAY

On 5 June, our staff ditched the boring socks and embraced the chaos in support of Crazy Socks 4 Docs Day – a day dedicated to breaking down the stigma around mental health in medicine and reminding healthcare workers that it's okay to ask for help.

And chaos there was.

While the socks were delightfully ridiculous, the message behind them is incredibly important.

Our doctors spend every day caring for others, often under immense pressure. Crazy Socks 4 Docs Day is a reminder that their mental health matters too, and that checking in with ourselves and our colleagues is just as important as looking after our patients.

A huge thank you to everyone who embraced the fun, started conversations and reminded us that looking after ourselves is just as important as looking after everyone else.

A special shoutout to Doctors Health Queensland for providing the prizes for our winners!

The socks were loud. They were questionable. Exactly the kind of energy we love to see when supporting doctors' mental health.





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Aboriginal and
Torres Strait
Islander Health
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WELCOME BABY TO COMMUNITY

Birth Registration Event

This June, we marked a deeply special day to wrap our arms around our newest community members and officially welcome them to community.

The Welcome Baby to Community and Birth Registration event was a small, intimate, and culturally safe space where every single one of the babies were seen, celebrated, and grounded in culture. Over the watchful eye of some Elders also in attendance and senior members of community who came to welcome these little ones with warmth and wisdom and who are the holders of great knowledge and have already been where our young families are today raising families and caring for children.

William Blackley shared words to welcome everyone followed by a performance by the

Sundowner Kalkatungu Dancers. Executive Director First Nations Health, Christine Mann, shared the story behind this event and the wonderful community we live in where local Council hosts a larger annual event which is a vibrant celebration. We know that for many families, sometimes the larger events can feel a bit much, with a baby, or when sensory and social environments feel a bit overwhelming.

As part of Growing Deadly Families, these celebrations recognise the importance of culture, belonging and connection from the very beginning of a child's life. The day provided a free birth registration opportunity for families in attendance, as well as Welcome Baby to Community certificates and nappy bag of goodies for the bubs.



WELCOME BABY TO COMMUNITY

Birth Registration Event

NWHHS were also supported by Gidgee Healing who provided tote bags that services were able to fill with products. Parents were asked to reflect if they have had their annual 715 Health Check that covers physical, social and emotional wellbeing to make sure the whole family stays strong. Ngukuthati Children & Family Centre with their activities and the ongoing support they provide families in birth registrations, information on their playgroups they host that are fun and supportive, as well as range of groups where families can get creative with the arts whilst being around other supportive parents and where NWHHS Child Health teams visit. 100.9 MOB FM radio announcer Jacob was the deadly MC and even treated parents and their bubs to a beautiful song. Midwifery teams were also part of this special day, seeing the bubs again joining in on activities on the day.

A big thank you to everyone who attended and helped make this event so special, including 2Seas Catering who provided the catering and Double Deadly Arts who captured photos on the day.







Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

NATIONAL RECONCILIATION WEEK

27 May to 3 June 2026



National Reconciliation Week 2026 saw a few significant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dates that give us the opportunity to pause, reflect, and deepen understanding of Australia's history. These dates are not just moments on a calendar, they are opportunities for truth-telling, reflection, learning and action. Reconciliation is about strengthening relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous peoples for the benefit of all of us. Truth-telling has always been at the heart of reconciliation and international experience shows that when people are given the opportunity to share their truth and it is heard, people can move forward with their lives.

For Reconciliation Week 2026, North West HHS was present for the Doomadgee Truth Telling and Reconciliation Day, held on 27 May 2026 at Middle Park, Doomadgee. This

day was held to progress Recommendations 2 and 3 of the inquest that was held into the deaths of three Aboriginal women who died between September 2019 and September 2020 due to rheumatic heart disease. Considerable work has occurred since this time, with the final outstanding recommendations culminating in this deeply moving event to conclude the work. The day involved community members sharing their truths about their experiences with the health system and their vision for the future. In response, North West HHS and primary health care provider Gidgee Healing provided response back to the community including North West HHS committing to the developed Doomadgee Health Vision. The event commenced with the Doomadgee Dancers, BBQ provided by Gunawuna Jungai and supported by Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council and Yellagundgimarra Aboriginal Health Council, with Mick Gooda facilitating the days proceedings.

SHAPING THE FUTURE OF THE FIRST NATIONS HEALTH WORKFORCE

The Office of the Chief Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Officer visited the North West to connect with local staff and strengthen the future of Queensland's First Nations health workforce.

North West Hospital and Health Service welcomed representatives from the Office of the Chief Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Officer (OCATSIHWO) as part of a statewide roadshow connecting with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health staff across Queensland.

The visit provided an opportunity for staff and managers to meet with the statewide team, learn more about current workforce initiatives and contribute their own experiences and ideas to help shape future strategies.

Recognising that local knowledge is essential to building a strong and sustainable workforce, the roadshow focused on listening to the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff working across diverse clinical and non-clinical roles throughout the North West.

Discussions explored opportunities to strengthen recruitment, retention, professional development and career pathways, while ensuring First Nations voices remain central to workforce planning and decision-making.

The visit also reinforced the importance of collaboration between local health services and statewide leadership in creating culturally safe workplaces where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff are supported to thrive.

By bringing these conversations directly to regional and remote communities, the roadshow highlighted a shared commitment to growing a strong First Nations workforce that reflects, understands and supports the communities it serves.

19% Target

*12% NWHHS FN
workforce*

North West HHS Consumer Engagement

*Highlighting our communities' role
in shaping care across the North West*



Mikayla Kuskopf
Public Relations

Your Experience Could Shape Healthcare

Every visit to a hospital, clinic or health centre tells a story.

At NWHHS, consumers are helping shape the future of healthcare across our region by sharing their ideas, experiences and feedback through Consumer Advisory Groups and committees.

These groups bring together community members, patients, carers and families to work alongside staff on projects ranging from hospital design and service improvements to patient information, policies and strategic planning.

You don't need a healthcare background to get involved. In fact, that's the point. We are looking for people with real-life experience of using our services. People who are passionate about making healthcare better for their communities and future generations.

Consumer representatives have already helped improve the way we communicate with patients, influenced the design of new facilities and contributed to decisions that affect healthcare across the North West. Every conversation brings a different perspective, helping ensure our services reflect the needs of the people who use them.

As our region continues to grow, so does the opportunity for community voices to help shape the future of healthcare. If you've ever thought, "Someone should do something about that," this could be your chance to be part of the solution. We'd love to hear from you.

Interested in helping shape local healthcare?

Email nwhhs.engagement@health.qld.gov.au to find out how you can get involved.

Quality and Safety Quarterly Report

January - March 2026

At North West Hospital and Health Service, we work hard to make sure our patients receive safe, effective, and high-quality care. We check the quality of our care by looking at patient outcomes, healthcare processes, and patient satisfaction.

Our quality management systems help us keep our care consistent and thorough across all hospitals. This means we regularly track and report on:

- Medication safety
- Safety incidents
- Readmission rates
- Patient feedback

These checks are part of our everyday work. By paying close attention to these areas, we aim to keep improving and providing the best possible care and health outcomes for our community.

Medication Safety

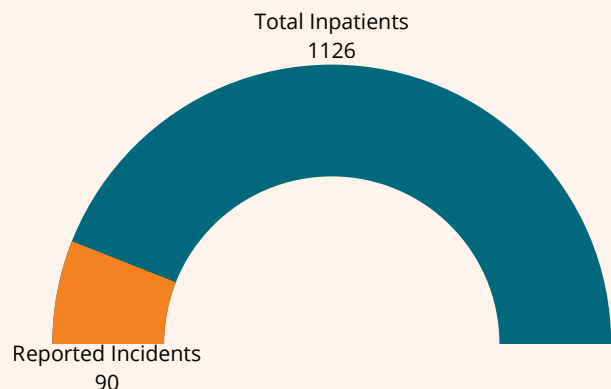
Medication Safety
January - March 2026
Total:90

Medication mistakes can affect a person's health and may cause harm. NWHHS has safety systems to help prevent these mistakes. Our staff are trained to use medicines safely and correctly.

Medication mistakes can happen when:

- A medicine is prescribed incorrectly
- The wrong amount or type is given

Consumers can play an active role in preventing medication errors by speaking up about concerns if something feels wrong such as a different looking pill or unexpected side effects, checking prescriptions, clarifying instructions and understanding how and when to take medication.



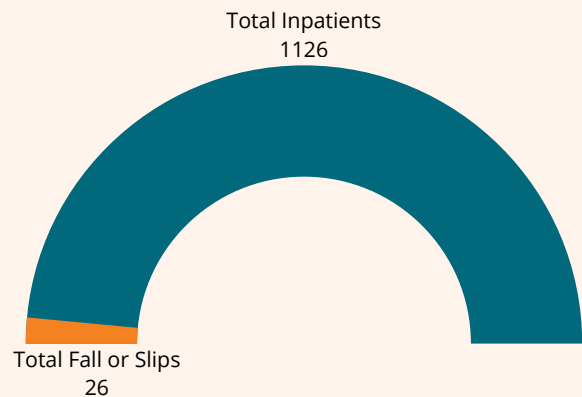
SOURCE: Healthcare Standards Unit

NWHHS Balance

Slips and Falls

NWHHS reduces slips and falls through risk assessments, patient education, and tailored care plans. We promote safe mobility with assistive devices, regular monitoring, and environmental safety measures. Staff receive ongoing training, and we involve patients and families in fall prevention strategies.

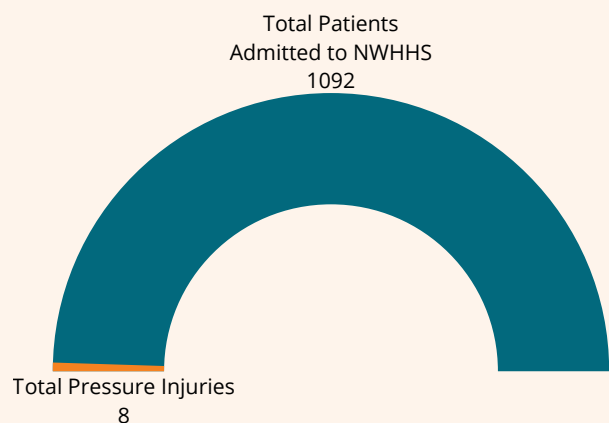
Consumers can help prevent falls by being aware of your surroundings, using walking aids if needed, wearing safe shoes, keep floors clear, use handrails, and let staff know if you feel unsteady or dizzy. Working together with NWHHS staff, you and your family can help make sure you stay safe and avoid falls.



Pressure Injuries

NWHHS helps prevent pressure injuries by checking skin regularly, creating personalised care plans, and using specialised equipment. We encourage early action with support for movement, changing positions often, and staying hydrated and well-nourished. Our staff are trained to prevent pressure injuries, and we work with patients and families to keep skin healthy and improve recovery.

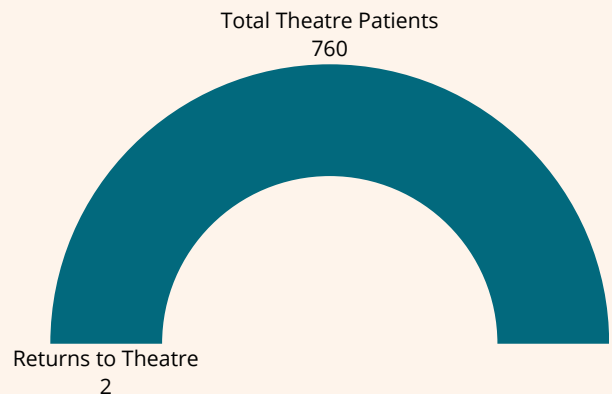
Consumers can help prevent pressure injuries by moving regularly, changing positions often, and using cushions or special mattresses if needed. Keeping skin clean and dry, drinking plenty of water, and eating nutritious meals also help protect the skin. Let staff know if you feel discomfort, notice redness, or have any concerns about your skin. Working together with your care team can help keep your skin healthy and prevent pressure injuries.



SOURCE: Healthcare Standards Unit

Unexpected return to theatre

If a patient needs unexpected surgery within a month of leaving the hospital, it is called an Unexpected Return to Theatre. This means they have to go under anaesthesia again, which comes with risks and can be stressful and worrying for both the patient and their family.

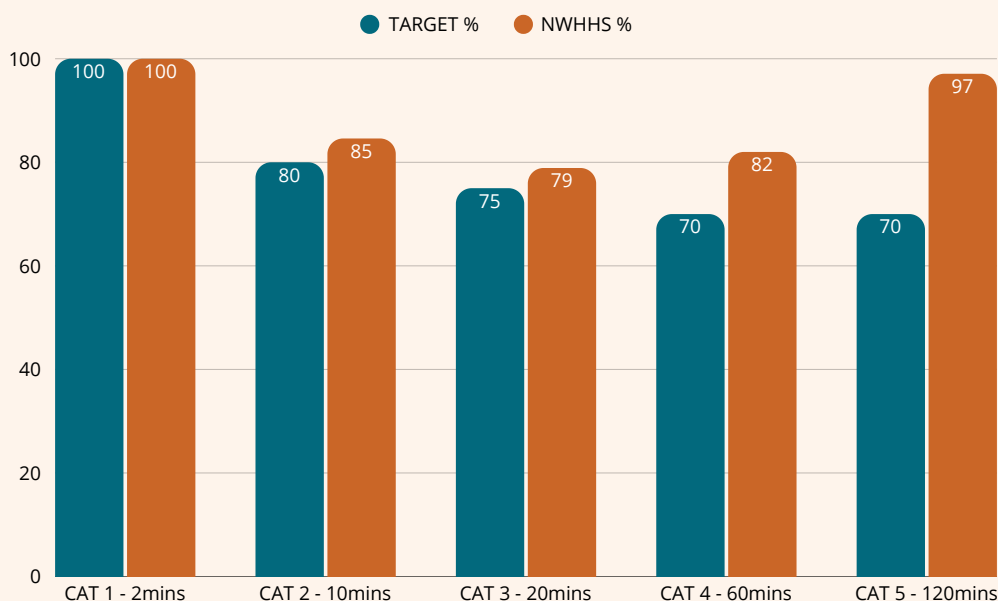


SOURCE: Healthcare Standards Unit

Emergency Department wait time by triage category

Emergency Department (ED) wait times show how quickly patients receive treatment after arriving. Patients are grouped into five categories based on how urgent their condition is. Category 1 is the most serious, needing help immediately, while Category 5 is for less serious issues.

The graph below compares the target wait times with the actual performance of the North West Hospital and Health Service from January to March 2025. For the most urgent cases (CAT 1), the target is to see 100% of patients within 2 minutes. For less urgent cases (CAT 2 to 5), the targets range from 10 to 120 minutes, and NWHHS met or exceeded all of these targets.



SOURCE: SPIRR Team

From the Consumer Liaison Officer



Natasha Dew

We are committed to continuously improving our services. If you or your family have visited any of our facilities in the North West we would love to hear from you! Your feedback is invaluable to us!

Consumer Compliment

"On behalf of the family of the late Anthony "Tony" who passed on Sunday, Feb 22, I would like to extend my sincerest gratitude to the team of ICU for the exceptional care they provided to our dear Tony , during his final journey. Special thanks to nurse Moana for her exemplary nursing care with kindness and compassion. Our beloved Tony died with dignity and was given and treated with respect. Moana and the other nurse Edu provided not just care but true comfort. I'd like to thank also a staff Nanette for being so kind and compassionate , giving kind words of encouragement to Tony's wife, Irene, during such difficult time."

Quarterly Feedback Review January - March 2026

This quarter, we received 305 feedback submissions, with 229 compliments highlighting great service and positive experiences.

While 75 complaints were recorded, they provide valuable insights for improvement. The strong ratio of compliments to complaints reflects our commitment to excellence and continuous growth.

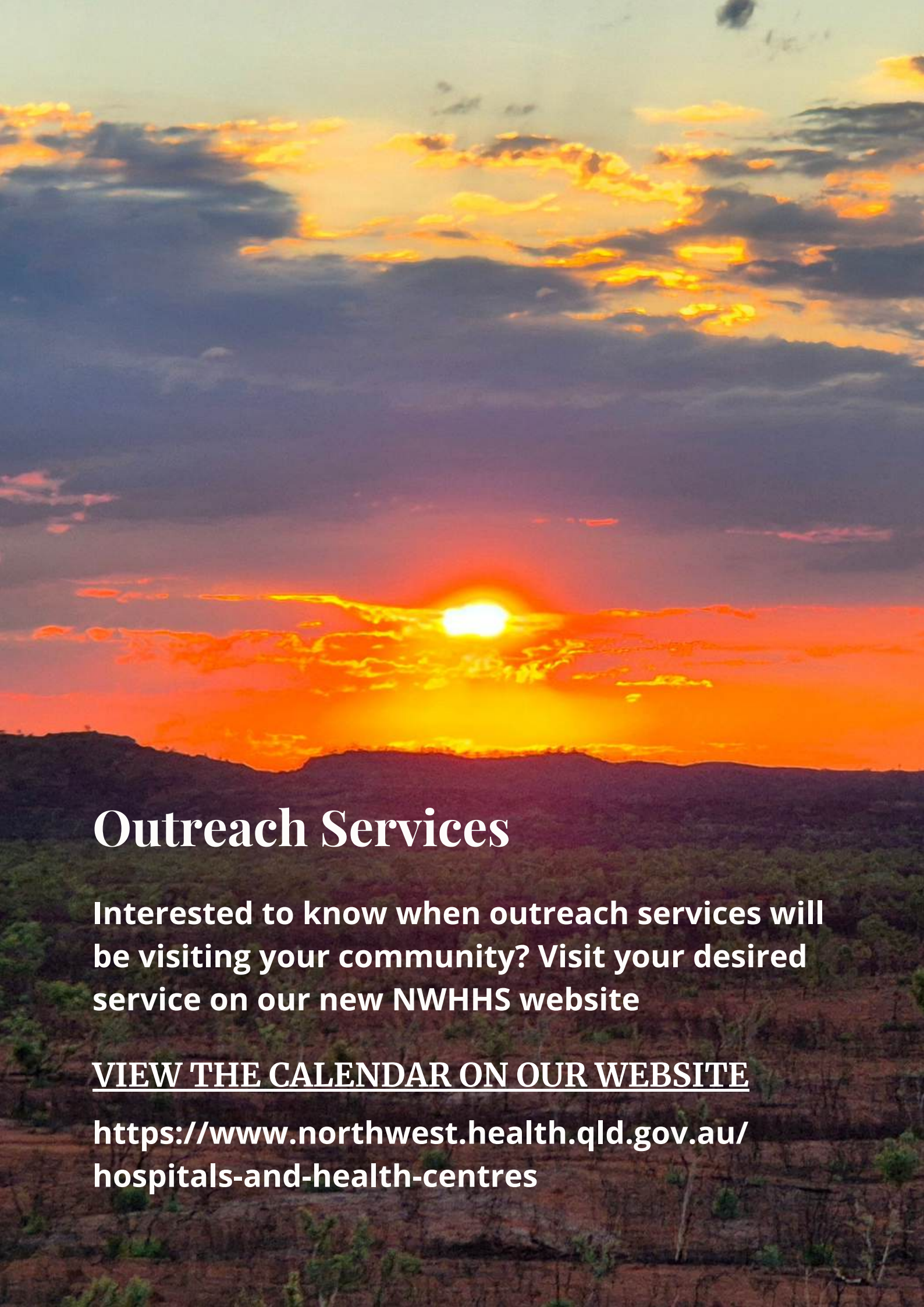
How to share your feedback

Email us: nwhhscl@health.qld.gov.au

Call us: (07) 4744 7115

Website: [North West Hospital and Health Service](#)





Outreach Services

Interested to know when outreach services will be visiting your community? Visit your desired service on our new NWHHS website

[VIEW THE CALENDAR ON OUR WEBSITE](https://www.northwest.health.qld.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-centres)

<https://www.northwest.health.qld.gov.au/hospitals-and-health-centres>



Feeling worried or no good?

We will take the time to listen. No shame, no judgement, safe place to yarn. We're here for you.

13 92 76

Wellbeing

STAY WELL THIS FLU SEASON

With winter here, now is the perfect time to protect yourself and your family by getting the annual influenza vaccine.



Influenza is more than just a bad cold. Each year, the virus causes serious illness, hospitalisations and complications for people of all ages, particularly young children, older adults, pregnant women and those with underlying health conditions.

The good news is that vaccination remains the best way to reduce your risk of becoming seriously ill and helps protect the wider community by limiting the spread of influenza.

This year, families also have another option. A needle-free nasal influenza vaccine is now available for children and young people aged 2 to 17 years, providing an alternative for those who may be anxious about needles.

The vaccine is quick, painless and offers the same important protection against seasonal influenza.

NWHHS encourages everyone to speak with their healthcare provider about the influenza vaccine that's right for them and to book their vaccination before flu season reaches its peak.



Classic Winter Pumpkin Soup



Ingredients

- 1.2 kg pumpkin cut into chunks
- 1 onion sliced
- 2 garlic cloves, peeled whole
- 750 ml vegetable or chicken broth/stock
- 250 ml water
- Salt and pepper
- 125 - 180 ml cream

Method

- 1.** Cut the skin off the pumpkin and scrape seeds out. Cut into 4cm / 1.5" chunks.
- 2.** Place the pumpkin, onion, garlic, broth and water in a pot – liquid won't quite cover all the pumpkin. Bring to a boil, uncovered, then reduce heat and let simmer rapidly until pumpkin is tender (check with butter knife) – about 10 minutes.
- 3.** Remove from heat and use a stick blender to blend until smooth.
- 4.** Season to taste with salt and pepper, stir through cream (never boil soup after adding cream, cream will split).
- 5.** Ladle soup into bowls, drizzle over a bit of cream, sprinkle with pepper and parsley if desired. Serve with crusty bread!

You are not alone.

Support is available.

If you feel overwhelmed, talk to a health professional. Speak to your GP about what support you need and how you can access it.

Lifeline's **13 11 14** crisis support service is available 24/7. Anyone in Australia can speak to a trained Crisis Supporter over the phone, any time of the day or night.



North West Hospital and Health Service

BALANCE



**Do you have a story that needs
to be shared?**

Contact North West HHS
Public Relations

07 4744 4871 NWHHS_Communication@health.qld.gov.au

