This report:

– fulfils statutory reporting requirements; and
– provides operational and performance data for the
  2009-10 financial year.

Contact:
Manager, Health Community Council Coordination
Office of the Director-General
147-163 Charlotte Street Brisbane Q 4000
GPO Box 48 Brisbane Q 4001

More information about Health Community Councils can be
found at  www.health.qld.gov.au

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Queensland Health, GPO Box 48, Brisbane 4001.
Letter of transmittal

The Honourable Paul Lucas MP  
Deputy Premier and Minister for Health  
Member for Lytton  
GPO Box 48  
Brisbane Qld 4001

Dear Deputy Premier

I am pleased to present to you the Southern Downs Health Community Council Annual Report for 2009-10. This report is a statutory function of the council and provides an outline of our performance during the year.

The report highlights activities against our key statutory functions of:
- undertaking community engagement about the health of, or health care for, the community;
- monitoring the quality, safety and effectiveness of public sector health services delivered in the council’s district; and
- enhancing community education about the delivery of public sector health services.

The council has now been in operation for its third year, and continues to play an important role in the reform process of Queensland Health. The activities of the council over the past three years have also included building partnerships between the community and Queensland Health to ensure that communities play a part in influencing, informing and improving the delivery of public health services in Queensland.

The council continues to meet at the six health service facilities of the Southern Downs area on a rotational basis. This provides an opportunity for members to keep abreast of existing services available, learn about new and enhanced services and meet staff. The council is keen to preserve their current structure where they can be the ‘eyes and ears’ for their communities.

During the next twelve months the council will continue to focus on community engagement and education opportunities to enhance the delivery of quality and safe health services within the community.

The council is disappointed that there was no final outcome to the Health Community Councils and Health Service Districts Alignment Review undertaken by Dr Kay Pearse in August 2009. The council feels that the work of the council has been left unsettled with regard to their future.

The council wishes to acknowledge the support and contribution provided by Ms Pam Lane, District Chief Executive Officer, Stewart Gordon, Executive Director, Rural Health and Aged Care and other executive directors of the district who at times attend meetings to brief members on their specific divisions. The council would also like to acknowledge the support provided by Ms Sharon French, Executive Support Officer.

We look forward to continuing our role within the community, working in partnership with Queensland Health, and most importantly, being able to bring continued improvements in the delivery of health services through our role and functions.

Yours sincerely

Marie Pietsch
Chairperson
Southern Downs Health Community Council
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**About health community councils**

Health Community Councils are a key component of the Queensland Government’s commitment to reforming the public health system and improving health service delivery for all Queenslanders.

Queensland’s 36 Health Community Councils are advisory bodies established under the provisions of *Health Services Act 1991*. The councils play an important role in the governance of public sector health services and work in partnership with Queensland Health.

The focus of the councils is to provide a community perspective in regards to the delivery of public sector health services in the local district. Councils do this through community engagement, community education and looking at safety, quality and effectiveness of the delivery of public sector health services within the local district.

Councils provide an opportunity for community members to participate in decision-making about health services by providing feedback about what is working well and areas for improvement. Council members facilitate community participation and contribute specialist knowledge and expertise to the delivery of public sector health services in the local district.

Queensland Health is responsible for providing administrative and funding support to councils to meet their responsibilities.
Establishment

Southern Downs Health Community Council was established under the authority of the *Health Services Act 1991* on 9 July, 2007. Members are appointed for a term of not more than four years.

Councils ordinarily do not consist of more than eight members and, if practicable, must include at least one member who is a general practitioner. Councils must also not include more than one member who is engaged in the delivery of public sector health services in the council’s district.

Membership

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Term of appointment</th>
<th>Attendance*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chairperson</td>
<td>Marie Pietsch</td>
<td>9 July 2007 – current</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Cliff Farrell</td>
<td>9 July 2007 – current</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Arthur Marriott</td>
<td>9 July 2007 – current</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Theresa Nicholas</td>
<td>9 July 2007 – current</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Alison Gaffney</td>
<td>9 July 2007 – current</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>David Downs</td>
<td>9 July 2007 – current</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Member</td>
<td>Darryl Chapman</td>
<td>9 July 2007 – current</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Number of meetings attended during 2009-10

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General practitioners</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members engaged in the delivery of public sector health services in council district</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Location

There is at least one health community council for each health service district. Southern Downs Health Community Council is located within the Darling Downs-West Moreton Health Service District of Queensland Health. Refer to Appendix A for a map of health service districts.

Statutory functions

Section 28M of the *Health Services Act 1991* (the Act) prescribes that health community councils are advisory bodies having the following functions.

(a) undertaking community engagement activities about the health of, or health care for, the community, including, for example—

(i) obtaining information and feedback from users of public sector health services about public sector health service issues; and

(ii) considering planning proposals in relation to the delivery of public sector health services, and facilitating community debate and feedback on the proposals; and

(iii) advocating for users of public sector health services, so as to influence decision-making about the delivery of the services;

(b) monitoring the quality, safety and effectiveness of public sector health services delivered in the council’s district;
(c) considering and evaluating reports about the delivery of public sector health services in the council’s district;

(d) enhancing community education about the delivery of public sector health services;

(e) advising, and making recommendations to, the manager for the council’s district about the matters mentioned in paragraphs (a) to (d);

(f) giving the Minister, within 3 months after the end of each year, a written report on the performance of its other functions during the year; and

(g) performing other functions as directed by the Minister.

Operations

For the reporting period of 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010.

Meetings

Councils should meet at least once every two months in addition to any specific meetings directed by the Minister.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Council meetings held</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra meetings held at direction of the Minister</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Record keeping

Queensland Health is responsible for managing the records of Health Community Councils within the district and ensuring compliance with the provisions of the Public Records Act 2002 and Information Standard 40.

Expenditure

Council members are remunerated in accordance with the Queensland Government’s Remuneration Policy. Fees outlined are chairperson and members’ meeting fees and any special assignment fees. Other costs include travel allowances, motor vehicle allowances, catering, venue hire and any other costs associated with the activities of the council.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fees</td>
<td>5,285.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other costs</td>
<td>5,058.30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>$10,343.20</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Community engagement

The Act provides that Health Community Councils undertake community engagement activities about the health of, or health care for, the community. Councils may do this through:

- obtaining and providing information and feedback to and from users of public sector health services about public sector health service issues;
- considering planning proposals in relation to the delivery of public sector health services, and facilitating community debate and feedback on the proposals; and
- advocating for users of public sector health services, so as to influence decision-making about the delivery of the services.

In 2009-10, Southern Downs Health Community Council undertook the following community engagement activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation at community reference group meetings regarding the development of Inglewood Medical Centre.</td>
<td>Provide and receive information and feedback to council on progress of project. Advocate on behalf of local community to ensure that planning will meet the current and future demands of the community.</td>
<td>Ongoing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Council members attend and chair Community Advisory Committee meetings. There are currently five committees – Inglewood, Millmerran, Goondiwindi, Stanthorpe and Texas. These committees are represented from various community organisations both government and non-government. | Providing and receiving information and feedback. Minutes of these meetings are tabled for consideration and action as required. For example:  
- referral of complaints to the district chief executive officer and/or Executive Director, Rural Health and Aged Care for investigation, action and advice back to council. Complaints have included:  
  - transport issues from rural to tertiary facilities for consumers accessing specialist appointments;  
  - short timeframe on receipt of correspondence and date of appointment for patients to attend at Toowoomba;  
  - difficulties surrounding transfer and increase of mental health patients at Goondiwindi; and  
  - maintenance to health facilities.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                  | Ongoing         |
| Review of car parking for Warwick Health Service | Council members attended on-site meeting with Southern Downs Regional Council representatives to review car parking issues for Warwick Health Service. Council members suggested additional car parking spaces to be utilised from Locke Street or partial use of Victoria Park (Crown Land) adjacent to the Warwick Hospital.                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | Ongoing         |
| Rapid Appraisal Workshops 2009-10. RAWs to be held in each community of council area to engage the community to identify health needs and/or issues specific to each community for planning purposes. | Council members currently working collaboratively with Directors of Nursing and/or Facility Managers to plan and coordinate workshops.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                               | Progressing     |

Other

Nil.
Monitoring quality, safety and effectiveness

The Act provides that Health Community Councils monitor the quality, safety and effectiveness of public sector health services delivered in the council’s district. Councils can do this by considering and evaluating reports about the delivery of public sector health services in the district and then advising and making recommendations to the district chief executive officer.

In 2009-10, Southern Downs Health Community Council monitored the quality, safety and effectiveness of public sector health services through the following reports.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reports considered</th>
<th>Regularity</th>
<th>Feedback or recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Variable Life Adjusted Display System (VLADs) data including spreadsheet with progress of Queensland Health’s recommendations and actions</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Feedback to district chief executive officer for explanation on why VLAD indicators with no comments appear on reports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRIME CF (Complaints / Compliments)</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Noted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk Register / Root Cause Analysis including spreadsheet with progress against recommendations</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>Noted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation of Care – Rural Division</td>
<td>Quarterly</td>
<td>Noted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Quality and Safety Committee Minutes</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Noted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Health &amp; Aged Care Division Quality and Safety Committee Minutes</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Noted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern Downs Hospital Activity Statistics</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Noted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critical Staff Vacancy Reports – Medical, Nursing, Allied Health</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Noted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Chief Executive Officer</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Noted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safe Inter-hospital Patient Transfers Steering Committee Meeting Minutes (Rural Health and Aged Care Division)</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Noted. Recommendation that Queensland Ambulance Service – Nursing Escort/Inter-hospital Patient Transfer be as a standing agenda item due to issues raised with difficulty in returning rural nursing escorts to work base.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>District Operational Plan</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Noted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rural Health and Aged Care Division Operational Plan</td>
<td>Annually</td>
<td>Noted.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Consultative/Advisory Committee Minutes – Goondiwindi, Inglewood, Millmerran, Texas, Stanthorpe</td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>Noted</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other

Health Quality and Complaints Commission reports received and noted.
Community education

The Act requires that Health Community Councils enhance community education about the delivery of public sector health services. Councils may do this through receiving factual information from the district chief executive officer about public sector health services and giving that information to the community and raising community awareness and understanding about available services, service delivery and issues impacting on public sector health services in the district.

In 2009-10, Southern Downs Health Community Council enhanced community education through the following activities.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at Breastfeeding Workshop, Stanthorpe</td>
<td>Received information and feedback regarding promotion of breastfeeding.</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance at Mental Health Week functions in Stanthorpe and Goondiwindi.</td>
<td>Received information and feedback on various conference/awareness sessions held about availability and access to mental health services and mental health programs in the local communities and the exercise stops established on walkways.</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council representative at the Health Expo, Millmerran.</td>
<td>Promoted and increased awareness and understanding about the role and functions of the council and health services available in the Millmerran community.</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other
Nil.

Special assignment activities

Councils may be directed by the Minister to undertake other functions. Additionally, a council chairperson or member may undertake specific activities on behalf of or representing the council outside the council’s planned activities or arrangements. Special assignment fees are applicable for these activities or arrangements.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
<th>Status</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Combined meetings of the five Health Community Councils within the district were held in July and November 2010.</td>
<td>Discussion about how to manage and prioritise community activity projects that would not be completed within individual councils should the Alignment Review progress and the number of councils reduced. Further action is on hold until outcomes of the Alignment Review and the Federal health reforms are known.</td>
<td>Completed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A

Health service districts from August 2008