

Director-General's report



I am pleased to present the Queensland Health Annual Report – the 101st such report on the health of Queenslanders and the first for the new millennium.

The dedicated efforts of some 63,000 dedicated and highly skilled staff over the course of the year provided quality health care to achieve better health and well being for all Queenslanders. Queensland Health is focused on maximising effective and efficient service delivery.

The organisation had final operating revenues of \$4 billion in 2000-2001.

Of this, the Commonwealth provided \$1.448 billion (about 36.2 per cent) through the Australian Health Care Agreement, the Home and Community Care Agreement and other specific purpose grants and payments.

Over the past few years, Queensland Health has invested heavily in improving the capacity of our organisation and the capability of our staff to deliver efficient and effective health services. We have done this by establishing world class systems that aid in maximising the resources available for health services.

Building on these existing management and information systems, the department released in July 2000 the *Information Management Strategic Plan 2000-2005* as the blueprint for managing information and associated technology for the next five years. The central task for information management is to ensure health providers, managers, policy makers, staff and clients

a blueprint for managing information and technology

have access to timely and high quality information when and where it is required.

Building staff capacity

Provision of training and development opportunities for staff in metropolitan, rural and remote Queensland has been a strong focus for Queensland Health. These opportunities enabled:

- staff to use technology to access training programs without leaving their local community
- 413 staff to graduate from the Queensland Health Management Development (Distance Education) Program with a further 124 students enrolled this year
- the online National Public Service Training Package to commence, with students able to electronically access information statewide, and
- rural and remote staff to network with other professionals through the statewide satellite broadcast and teleconferencing facilities.

I use the satellite broadcast each month to address and inform Queensland Health executive staff across the State.

Major initiatives in workforce planning progressed during 2000-2001 included:

- the commencement of strategies stemming from the Ministerial Taskforce on Nursing Recruitment and Retention which included the establishment of a nursing career advisory service, review of the role of the enrolled nurse and registered nurses, implementation of a rural undergraduate scholarship scheme and piloting rosters in rural, remote, metropolitan and provincial settings
- improving access to targeted professional development for allied health staff in areas of mental health, diabetes and coronary heart disease, and
- updating the policy to credential medical practitioners located in rural areas.

Queensland Health also worked cooperatively with other health care providers to ensure the continuum of care provided to our patients was of the highest standard. An innovative \$1.8 million scheme commenced to enhance partnership relationships between general practitioners and the Queensland Health system in Townsville, Bundaberg, Redcliffe-Caboolture, Bayside and the Royal Brisbane Hospital Health Service Districts. In all projects, doctors from the Divisions of General Practice worked with public health staff to develop models of care to improve patient care before and after hospital admission.

Strategic directions

Underpinned by sophisticated technological systems and skilled staff, the focus shifted early in 2000 to identify strategic directions to drive corporate-wide planning and management and to guide resource allocation for the first decade of the millennium. It is timely to look at major achievements in each strategic direction.

A prime concern for Queensland Health is to address the burden of disease on society. Over the next few decades chronic and complex conditions will comprise an increasing proportion of health care activity. Queensland Health is developing comprehensive health outcome plans in all National Health Priority areas to focus on preventive and treatment options that will improve health outcomes for individuals. Plans were released covering the management of diabetes mellitus and cardiovascular disease, as well as establishing strategies for injury prevention and control. Planning is also well advanced for health outcome plans in the areas of child and youth health and asthma.

The second strategic direction – improving Indigenous health – is aimed at reducing the health status differentials between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people. Queensland Health's blueprint for activities in this regard, is a *Statement of Intent for Reconciliation* signed in May 2000, which

identified nine symbolic and practical policies that have been adopted by the Queensland Health. As a key strategy in ensuring all the principles are adopted, Queensland Health strengthened cultural awareness training standards during 2000-2001 and conducted reconciliation learning circles. Over time Queensland Health staff will participate in the program which is designed to ensure we deliver culturally secure and sensitive Indigenous health services.

The same approach is seen in the *Memorandum of Understanding for the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Alliance*, published in June 2001.

I brought together various organisations such as the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Forum, Divisions of General Practice, the Queensland Branch of the Australian Medical Association and other professional bodies involved with rural health issues, Queensland Health and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care. The alliance will assist coordination of all services to Indigenous people, bearing in mind that health and well-being is best addressed by enhanced partnerships to identify and address the underlying causes of ill health and injury.

Targeted health initiatives implemented in remote locations included an extension of a diabetes patient recall and reminder system in the Torres Strait which resulted in a dramatic reduction in hospital admissions for people with diabetes; an enhanced model of Primary Health Care and Chronic Disease Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities in Cape York; a two-year pilot program providing ear, nose and throat specialty outreach services for young children; an Indigenous Paediatric Respiratory Outreach Program; the establishment of self care dialysis on Mornington Island and the development and implementation of an Alcohol and Drug Strategy for Cape York.

Thirdly, in terms of balancing our investment in health, the department is now well past the half way mark in its \$2.8

culturally
secure and
sensitive
health
services

billion hospital rebuilding and capital equipment program. The focus now is to ensure all services are finetuned to maximise efficiency and deliver services based on need in the areas as close as possible to where people live. During 2000-2001, as part of Queensland Health's evidence-based approach to service delivery, a Clinicians Knowledge Network was established in all public hospitals. The network, the largest of its kind in Australia, provides clinicians in all public hospitals with online access to clinical information 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Under the direction of the Chief Health Officer, another initiative commenced which will derive substantial benefits to Queensland Health's evidence-based health services. The development of a *Strategic Framework for Health and Medical Research and Development* is seen as 'stage one' in a program to facilitate the delivery of evidence-based health services. The framework has been designed to support linkages between health practitioners, health and medical researchers, the university sector, industry and other government agencies. It aims to identify research priorities and disseminate research findings to policy makers, clinicians and health service managers, and consumers. It will deliver improved accountability for Queensland Health's research investment which will be aligned to the Queensland Health's strategic priorities, and also contribute to the government's 'Smart State' agenda.

Legislative changes

Thirteen new registration Bills for specific health professions and the *Health Practitioners Legislation Amendment Bill*

2001 were passed in May. The Bills replaced existing boards with new health practitioner registration boards to regulate chiropractors, dentists, dental technicians, dental prosthetists, medical practitioners, medical radiation technologists, occupational therapists, optometrists, osteopaths, pharmacists, physiotherapists, podiatrists, psychologists and speech psychologists. Under the new legislation, health consumers will play a stronger role in the regulation of the health professions by increased involvement on practitioner registration boards.

Quality framework

The \$120 million Quality Improvement and Enhancement Program, funded through the *Australian Health Care Agreement 1998-2003*, led to the adoption in October 2000 of the *Queensland Health Strategic Plan for Quality*. A total of 23 projects commenced with benefits including system redesign, better use of data, and support for a culture of safety and quality already being seen in Queensland Health facilities. The program has attracted a high level of interest in Australia and overseas, particularly in the areas of informed consent, credentialling, quality use of medicines and infection control. Queensland's ground breaking work is also being used to assist in national planning by the Australian Council on Safety and Quality in Health Care.

Mental health

The reform of Integrated Mental Health Services continued during the year as Queensland Health completed the first half of the *10-Year Mental Health Strategy for Queensland*. The development of new community mental health services and redistribution of existing services provided improved access and continuity of care for mental health consumers throughout the State. Queensland achieved the highest proportion of mental health acute beds accommodated within general hospitals rather than institutions, as recommended by the National Mental Health Strategy.

balancing our
investment in health

Importantly, Queensland Health improved staff training and development programs and other implementation strategies in preparation for the new *Mental Health Act 2000*, which will come into effect mid-way through the 2001-2002 reporting year.

The capital works program for mental health services neared completion with new community care units at Redcliffe and on the Sunshine Coast, a 10-bed youth unit at Logan Hospital and a total of 129 other new beds at The Prince Charles Hospital, the Bayside Health Service District, the Toowoomba Hospital and at Kirwan, in Townsville.

Initiatives for children and young people

Further expansion of the School Based Youth Health Nurse Program to 112 nurses led to services being provided in 236 schools with secondary students. The program provides for nurses to work in partnership with Education Queensland to support curriculum and learning and teaching activities designed to improve the health and well-being of young people. The initiative encourages a safe transition into adulthood for students and lays the foundations for positive health values, attitudes and behaviours.

The Triple P Positive Parenting Program has expanded and is now offered from every health service district in the State. Counsellors who operate the 24 hour telephone advisory service from the Riverton Centre were also trained in Triple P to ensure consistency of parenting strategies across paediatric health services. Since its commencement, the program has conducted 668 Triple P groups involving more than 6,500 parents.

These and our many other achievements outlined in this report would not have been possible without the commitment and dedication of Queensland Health's staff and the members of advisory committees which operate across the health professions.

I express my thanks to staff throughout the

State for their efforts, their professionalism and their commitment to delivering quality health services to all those in our care.

I also extend special thanks to the thousands of volunteers who make an invaluable contribution to health service delivery in our hospitals and in the community. During this, the International Year of the Volunteer, Queensland Health formally acknowledged their efforts with the presentation of a Ministerial medal to an outstanding volunteer in each health service district, as well as certificates of appreciation awarded to individual volunteers and almost 1000 non-government community organisations. I personally commend your support, and look forward to a continuation of this vital health partnership which leads to better health and well-being for all Queenslanders.

Dr Robert Stable
Director-General

expanding
community
services

Executive team

Director-General and Chief Executive Officer

Dr Robert Stable

Adjunct Professor (University of Queensland) MB, BS (Q), MHP (NSW), FRACGP, FRACMA, FCHSE, CHE, FAIM

Dr Stable was appointed Director-General of Queensland Health in January 1996.

The Director-General is responsible for:

- provision of strategic advice to the Minister on policies and legislation
- leadership to implement a strategic approach to management
- efficient and effective delivery of health services throughout Queensland which achieve government policy outcomes
- ensuring management and budgetary operations are accountable and consistent with best practice, government policies, legislative requirements and appropriate practice.

General Manager, Health Services

Dr John Youngman

MBBS (Qld.), MPH (Harvard), FRACGP, FRACMA, FAIM

Dr Youngman was appointed Deputy Director-General, Health Services in 1996, with the position redesignated to General Manager, Health Services in 1999.

Responsibilities include:

- strategic leadership and management of the Health Services Division
- executive management of health planning and procurement
- assessment and enhancement of the delivery of health services and processes
- delivery of specific health outcomes, priorities and targets through service agreements negotiated with health services providers, including the non-government sector.



Executive team meeting with support staff.

From left to right: Cheryl Paolucci, Dr David Filby, Sandra Thomson, Dr John Youngman, Professor Bryan Campbell and Dr Robert Stable

Deputy Director-General, Policy and Outcomes

Dr David Filby

BA (Flinders), PhD (Monash)

Dr Filby was appointed Deputy Director-General, Policy and Outcomes in October 1999.

Responsibilities include:

- development of the strategic plans for Queensland Health
- acquisition of funds from State and Commonwealth sources and management of the budget
- planning, developing and maintaining the capital infrastructure for health service delivery
- information and business management policy and strategy.

Chief Health Officer

Professor Bryan Campbell

AM, MD, FRACP, FRACMA

Professor Campbell was appointed Chief Health Officer in May 2000 following three years as Head of School at the Graduate School of Medicine, University of Queensland.

Responsibilities include:

- provision of advice on health issues and matters relating to quality, standards and clinical risk management as well as

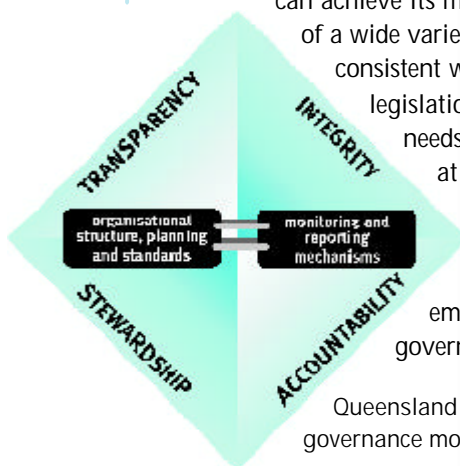
- ethics and research
- provision of administrative and professional support to the statewide clinical audit process
- coordination of health and medical research and development activities through a framework linking statewide and national activities
- providing advice on and licensing private health facilities according to the *Private Health Facilities Act 1999*
- provision of direction for professional medical education
- provision of administrative management services to the Mental Health Tribunal, Patient Review Tribunal and the coordination of emergency health services.

Corporate governance and accountability

Queensland Health's corporate model framework provides an integrated forward-looking model that closely aligns corporate planning, strategy development, resource allocation and service delivery with the department's core business of improving the health and well-being of all Queenslanders.

The aim is to ensure that Queensland Health can achieve its mission through the delivery of a wide variety of services in a manner consistent with Government policy, legislation, identified population needs and other requirements, at all times respecting the rights of patients, clients and employees. Queensland Health ensures its employees are informed on governance issues.

Queensland Health corporate governance model



Strategic directions

Queensland Health's strategic directions are aimed at ensuring a balanced development of the State's health services to meet the emerging demands facing Queensland



an appropriate mix of services

Health. The main strategies for the next decade are:

- addressing the burden of disease eg. improving prevention and management of chronic illness
- improving Indigenous health eg. reducing the health status differentials between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people)
- balancing the investment in health eg. ensuring an appropriate mix of acute health services, prevention and early intervention measures, and rehabilitation and maintenance services.

The Director-General chairs a Strategic Directions Group which comprises the senior executive staff of Queensland Health. It is through this group that basic stewardship and leadership, standards and quality improvement strategies are developed. The group provides essential integration and uniformity of approach in the development of policies and strategies for delivery of health service outcomes.

A number of executive committees address issues of key strategic importance in achieving organisational goals and objectives. The committees include the Queensland Health Council on Safety and Quality in Health Care; Procurement Council; Information Steering Committee; Strategic Asset Steering Committee; Audit and Risk Management Committee; and the Finance Committee.

The *Queensland Health Strategic Plan 2000-2010* is the foundation of Queensland Health's planning framework. Other key strategic plans include the *Information Management Strategic Plan*, the *Corporate Business Plan* and the *Capital Investment Strategic Plan*, developed in accordance with the *Financial Management Standards 1997*. The results of integrated planning are reflected in the annual Ministerial Portfolio Statements which articulate the budget, outputs, performance measures and targets to be achieved by Queensland Health.

Quality of health services

Queensland Health's *Quality of Health Services Framework* focuses on the continuous improvement of processes, services and products through the adoption of quality management principles and standards. This framework is designed to enhance the capacity for continuous improvement in health service delivery and is linked to a national framework and action plan for raising health care delivery standards.

Policies procedures and accountability

Updated policy and procedural information is available on the Queensland Health Electronic Publishing Service for Queensland Health staff. On joining Queensland Health, new employees attend induction programs and are advised on how to access this information.

Queensland Health maintains policies, practices and procedures for effective delegation of authority in accordance with the *Financial Management Standards 1997*. Delegations enable Queensland Health officers to perform their duties effectively and, in accordance with legislative and policy requirements.

In addition, Queensland Health is subject to a number of external accountability measures, including Treasury reporting, Queensland Audit Office scrutiny, Cabinet Budget Review Committee processes, and Parliamentary Estimates Committee hearings. In 2000-2001, Queensland Health participated in the Queensland Audit Office's review of corporate governance and risk management practices.

Maintaining an ethical workplace

Staff receive training and development on cultural awareness and reconciliation, and equal employment opportunity, anti-discrimination and sexual harassment policies to manage these issues appropriately in the workplace.

In line with the *Public Sector Ethics Act 1994*, Queensland Health's *Code of Conduct* establishes the department's principles and ethical values to promote an organisational culture of professionalism focused on client service and employee awareness. The *Code of Conduct* is regularly reviewed, and during 2000-2001 Queensland Health issued an updated version.

The *Queensland Health Fraud Prevention and Control Kit* was used in fraud education awareness and training workshops conducted in all health service districts. During training, staff were required to complete a fraud risk assessment, which is an essential tool in fraud prevention and control.

Risk management

Good risk management, awareness, and practice at all levels are a critical success factor in effective corporate governance. Through the Quality Improvement and Enhancement Program, an integrated risk management framework is being developed to cover all risks facing Queensland Health – clinical, non-clinical and corporate. As well as developing the framework, a risk management strategy, risk register and risk management education package are being developed.

...a focus
on client
service and
employee
awareness



economic and efficient use of resources

Internal Audit

Queensland Health's internal audit function operates in line with the *Financial Management Standards 1997*. The Audit and Operational Review Branch reports directly to the Director-General and is an accredited (ISO 9001) body which provides audit services to Queensland Health.

The Audit and Operational Review Branch has primary responsibility for appraising departmental performance through a focus on:

- reliability and integrity of information
- compliance with policies, plans, procedures, and regulations
- safeguarding assets
- economic and efficient use of resources
- promotion of integrity and ethical workplace practices.

Whistleblowers' protection

The *Whistleblowers' Protection Act 1994* protects people who report alleged unlawful, improper or negligent conduct in the public sector. The Act also provides significant redress for people who suffer reprisals as a result of their becoming a whistleblower.

During the year, 47 public-interest disclosures were made to Queensland Health about alleged inappropriate conduct. The allegations were wide ranging and included alleged fraud/theft, patient abuse, drugs misuse, breach of confidentiality, misuse of assets or equipment and maladministration.

The outcomes of all investigations culminated in 34 substantiated disclosures and 13 unsubstantiated disclosures. This represents an increase of 23 per cent in Public Interest disclosures reported to Queensland Health during the previous financial year. This increase is viewed as a direct result of Queensland Health's ongoing commitment to sound corporate governance programs including fraud prevention, ethics and integrity training and the recently released statewide whistleblowers' policy.

Challenges for the future

Queensland Health will continue to meet the many challenges it faces by ensuring the directions outlined in the *Queensland Health Strategic Plan for 2001-2010* guide the development of a health system that is responsive to the needs of the public. The three Strategic Directions given priority have been identified as:

- addressing the burden of disease
- improving Indigenous health
- balancing the investment in health.

These Strategic Directions form the principle link to Queensland Government priorities and will drive the strategies underlying Queensland Health's Strategic Plan.

Policy development work is proceeding in the areas of aged care, children and young people, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and primary health and community care.

Strategic Direction 1: Addressing the burden of disease

Over the next two decades, the burden of chronic and complex disease is forecast to increase significantly. Queensland Health will continue to implement initiatives aimed at preventing and managing chronic illness, supporting promotional activities to improve health outcomes and reducing the social impact of illness on individuals and the community. Queensland Health is also working to establish partnerships with other health care providers such as general practitioners as well as harnessing some new Commonwealth benefits designed to improve the management of chronic disease.

Strategic Direction 2: Improving Indigenous health

Queensland Health has a two-fold commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, aimed at redressing the imbalance between the health of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Queenslanders.

Queensland Health has made a strong commitment to the national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Policy to be signed in December 2001, which will be used as a basis to revitalise the Queensland Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Policy. Queensland Health has adopted a whole-of-government approach to regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health planning with an emphasis on cultural awareness training and reconciliation. Using a redrafted curriculum the targets are: 10,000 people to complete cultural awareness training and 800 people to participate in reconciliation learning circles, by the end of 2003.

Strategic Direction 3: Balancing the investment in health

Queensland Health embraces a wide range of factors in balancing our investment in health that includes consideration of the best investments in treatment and prevention strategies, as well as achieving a better distribution of services and programs across the State. Queensland Health is moving to address the issue of how money should be spent on primary care and community care. The three key issues are:

- to gain a balance between prevention and acute care
- to expand our services taking geographic balance into account
- to balance our investment in facilities against our investment in staff.

Queensland Health will maintain a skilled workforce and the necessary infrastructure to deliver the appropriate mix of services and continuity of care to optimise the health of the Queensland population.



maintaining
a skilled
workforce

