

Performance

Balancing the investment in health



...developing a world-class workforce dedicated to providing excellence in health care

Queensland Health is committed to providing a balanced health care system. Delivering balanced health care requires an appropriate and careful mix of acute health services, ongoing investment in prevention and early intervention measures, and the development and enhancement of rehabilitation and maintenance services.

Queensland Health works to balance the State's investment in health and support government priorities by:

- working across government to build healthy, livable environments and communities
- developing a world-class workforce dedicated to providing excellent health care
- investing in capital assets, health equipment and technology to support the most decentralised health system in Australia
- developing partnerships with general practice and other non-government organisations to enhance access to health services across the State.

Communities Building healthy, livable environments and communities

Queensland Health works in partnership with other agencies to ensure effective whole-of-government policies that provide essentials for health – healthy livable environments, safe cohesive communities, access to quality education and paid employment.

Key achievements

- Negotiated with the Commonwealth to provide additional planning funds of up to \$120,000 for regions covered by the Primary Health Care Access Program. Currently five regions have satisfied capacity criteria, and another two are engaged in capacity building to qualify for the funding
- Signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Commonwealth to supply free pharmaceutical medicines through Queensland Health operated or funded health services in remote areas
- Progressed statewide consultation on, and implementation of, national food safety reforms relating to the *National Food Safety Standards, Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code*, amendments to the *Food Act*

1981 and Food Hygiene Regulation 1989. Activities included 12 consultation workshops, 25 presentations on new requirements, provision of support and resources to local governments, and communication activities including information sheets and a regular newsletter

- Enhanced food safety compliance of Queensland food businesses through the delivery of 10 accredited training courses to 140 environmental health officers who work as food safety regulators
- Redeveloped the HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis C and sexual health website for young people in partnership with Education Queensland. It supplies students and teachers with an interactive source of information for secondary schools implementing the new Health and Physical Education Curriculum
- Developed an international business strategy with the Department of State Development to strengthen trade links and increase health export opportunities

Workforce Developing a world-class workforce

Queensland Health is the State's largest organisation with more than 63,000 full and part-time employees. The employment profile, in full-time equivalents is summarised below.

Table 4
Full-time staffing equivalents
30 June 2002

Managerial and clerical	7380
Medical	2908
Nursing	16,280
Operational	8239
Trade and artisans	382
Visiting Medical Officers	294
Professional	4235
Technical	1044
Total	40,762

Queensland Health's People Plan provides for the ongoing development of employees in all occupational groups across the organisation and includes endeavours to maintain equal employment opportunities for all staff. Initiatives to achieve this are outlined in the *Queensland Health Equal Opportunity Strategic Plan* and annual operational plan.

Key achievements

Equal employment opportunities (EEO)

- Continuation of the proportion of women in the department at 74.2 per cent



- Increased the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders by 0.13 per cent to 2.03 per cent
- Increased the overall representation of employees from non-English speaking backgrounds to 8.4 per cent
- Upheld the proportion of people with a disability at 4.75 per cent



Recruitment and retention

Nurses

- Developed a nursing website www.thinknursing.com to provide advice and information on a career in nursing
 - Launched the Queensland Health Nursing Re-entry Assistance Scheme to provide former nurses with paid employment in a Queensland Health facility while they undertake re-entry requirements
 - Implemented an on-line Graduate Nurse Recruitment System where nursing graduates can apply for any nursing position within Queensland Health on the Internet
 - Employed 593 graduates
 - Awarded 15 rural nursing scholarships to undergraduates in the final two years of nursing studies
 - Developed a statewide relief system to provide planned relief for rural and remote services
 - Commenced the statewide rollout of transition programs developed to attract nurses to specific clinical areas such as emergency, intensive care and aged care
- #### **Allied health**
- Developed the Allied Health Conditional Clinical Advancement Scheme to

provide a clinical career pathway for allied health employees and recognise outstanding clinical achievement and performance

- Implemented a professional development incentive package for rural and remote allied health employees to provide access to entitlement and paid leave to pursue relevant professional development activities
- Developed the Allied Health Professional Enhancement Program to enable provincial, and rural and remote employees to undertake advanced skills placements in another health service district, and metropolitan employees to work in rural areas
- Introduced a statewide Rural Connect Mentor scheme to provide allied health staff who work in rural and remote locations with mentoring support
- Commenced development of a Graduate Certificate in Remote Health Practice for Queensland Health's rural and remote allied health workforce to be trialled next year
- Implemented the Allied Health in Mental Health Practice Supervision module across the State to provide professionals with supervision of clinical practice to increase skill and autonomy

Medical workforce

- Commenced the Community Building Medical Service Capacity Project. Through this project communities contribute to the development of strategies which impact on recruiting and retaining medical workforce
 - Monitored the medical workforce needs of communities to determine the overall supply of doctors in certain locations
 - Surveyed senior Medical Officers working in rural hospitals on career choices and intentions, work roles, and training needs. Results of the survey will be used when developing strategies to support and retain officers in these positions
 - Provided rural preparation workshops to Queensland Health Resident Medical Officers who provide relief for rural hospital staff
- #### **Administrative staff**
- Introduced the Graduate Development Program and recruited 24 graduate trainees from disciplines including business, finance, information technology and human resource management. All trainees undertook a structured 12-month training and development program involving corporate and regional placements
 - Approved 1500 staff from

all occupational groups to undertake self-paced modules leading to a range of qualifications from certificate II to diploma level under the Leadership Development Program

Rewarding excellence

The annual Queensland Health Staff Excellence Awards are part of the department's commitment to recognising individual and team contributions to organisational excellence. More than 300 people were involved in the projects with the following awards being presented:

Director-General's Special Commendation

Public Health Services and Pathology and Scientific Services for their responsible and professional management of public health issues, in particular the seasonal meningococcal infections in the State

Policy and Outcomes

Gold

A Health Outcomes Unit team who collaborated extensively to develop a package for the *Management of Diabetes Mellitus in Adults - Standard Care Pathway 2000*

Silver

The team from the Pine Rivers Mental Health Community Care Unit for their supportive work in assisting mentally ill patients learn living skills in a non-institutional setting

Bronze

Aboriginal and Torres Islander Health Policy Unit for development of Reconciliation Learning Circles, an innovative approach to supporting cultural awareness training within Queensland Health

Highly commended

A team of occupational therapists at the Bayside Health Service District for their work in managing handwriting issues in pre-school and primary school children

Health Service Delivery

Gold

Brisbane-based project team from Public Health Services for developing *Food Safety Matters*, a teaching and training resource for secondary school students covering safe food handling practices

Silver

The Princess Alexandra Hospital Busy Bee Volunteer Service for their continued friendly support to patients, families and staff at the hospital

Bronze (joint winners)

Five staff members from the Division of Mental Health Services at the Royal Brisbane Health Service District for procedures leading to a 14 per cent reduction in pharmaceutical costs

The Clinical Research Unit at the Psychiatric Department at Cairns Base Hospital, primarily involved in trials of new psychotropic drug treatment

Highly commended (joint winners)

Staff at the Eventide Nursing Home Sandgate for their effort in preparing for accreditation by the Aged Care Standards Agency

Two teams of dental therapists from the North Brisbane Oral Health Units who comprise the Tooth Troupe to perform oral health care pantomimes at child care centres

Investing in capital assets, health equipment and technology

Capital Works

Queensland Health is nearing completion of the largest hospital building and equipment program ever undertaken in Australia. The \$2.8 billion program has rebuilt, refurbished and re-equipped hospitals and community health facilities across the State.

Key achievements

- Further construction as part of the Cairns Hospital Redevelopment included a mental health unit, pathology and engineering buildings, a clinical services building, major refurbishment of two existing



facilities and space for the James Cook University

- Completed a new secure mental health unit, a rehabilitation day centre, a privately operated central energy facility, a privately operated cafeteria, and a new acute mental health unit as part of the **Townsville Hospital Redevelopment**

- Concluded the final phase of the **Gold Coast Hospital Redevelopment**. This involved the construction of a new rehabilitation building with 20 inpatient beds, day rehabilitation facilities, two procedure rooms for endoscopy, expanded orthopaedic outpatients, shared support facilities, a waste handling unit, and a new vehicle set down and collection area

- Completed a four-level facility with links to existing buildings in the redevelopment of the **Nambour Hospital**

- Opened a 16 bed rehabilitation unit and library as the final phase of the **Mackay Hospital Redevelopment**

- Constructed a new central sterilising supply department (CSSD) and endoscopy unit at **Maryborough Hospital**

- Completed a number of projects in the \$100 million **Mental Health Capital Works Program** including:

- a new community care unit on the Rosemount campus catering for 20 patients requiring rehabilitation or extended care
- a 10 bed Acquired Brain Injury Unit at Kirwan
- a 57 bed Acute Mental Health Unit at Toowoomba General Hospital which includes six child and adolescent beds
- accommodation for rehabilitation, dual diagnosis/acquired brain



injury, and services for intellectual disability, living skills and psychogeriatric patients at the Baillie Henderson Hospital

- a 16 bed Acquired Brain Injury Unit at Sandgate

- Commissioned the Caboolture Hospital Critical Care Unit with six beds, including two with ventilation capacity and a negative pressured room for isolating infectious patients. Additional medical, nursing and allied health professionals have been progressively recruited to staff the unit

- Extended the clinical services building at Rockhampton Hospital to provide four operating theatres, day surgery, recovery, CSSD, allied health, mortuary and conference room facilities. A new front entrance and area for privately operated cafeteria/ kiosk was also provided

- Outfitted the main building extension at the Princess Alexandra Hospital to accommodate research and pathology. Refurbishment of the spinal injuries unit and accommodation for prosthetics and orthotics were also completed

- Completed the construction of the Comprehensive Cancer Research Centre on the Herston campus

Health Technology Replacement Program

- Replaced 1700 health technology items across Queensland including mobile x-ray units, ultrasounds, anaesthetic machines, dialysis equipment items used in general medical and other items used in general medicine and intensive care

- Established a new \$3.6 million Cardiovascular Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) Centre of Excellence at The Prince Charles Hospital. Clinical trials using the advanced MRI equipment were conducted at The Prince Charles Hospital to develop faster and more accurate diagnosis of heart and other thoracic diseases, as well as facilitate improved patient care

- Commissioned a second MRI for the Royal Brisbane Hospital for use in advanced research and treatment of dementia, stroke, heart disease and Parkinson's disease. It provides clinicians with the most advanced images of neurological and cardiac conditions. This forms part of a \$10 million project involving Queensland Health, the University of Queensland and The Wesley Hospital

- Commissioned a general Magnetic Resonance Imaging machine at the Gold Coast Hospital. Planning is underway for installation of a machine at

Nambour Hospital. MRI technology is now operating at the Royal Brisbane, Princess Alexandra, Townsville, The Prince Charles and Gold Coast hospitals

- During 2001-02 Queensland Health:
 - commenced the Radiation Oncology Service at the Princess Alexandra Hospital following fit-out and installation of two linear accelerators and a range of specialised equipment, including a computerised simulator and therapy planning system. Within a very short period of time, the new service was treating 60 patients a day
 - commissioned a new linear accelerator at Townsville Hospital and transferred an existing machine to the Douglas Hospital site from North Ward to enhance cancer therapies in North Queensland. The higher quality radiation therapy treatment reduced the incidence of side effect to patients undergoing radiation treatment
 - purchased replacement linear accelerators for Royal Brisbane Hospital as part of the Herston Hospitals Complex Redevelopment

Clinical Information technology

- More than 140 hospitals and community health services access Queensland Health's Clinicians Knowledge Network (CKN) through the wide area network
- Initiated a new clinical informatics program to guide Queensland Health's investment in a patient-centred electronic health record
- A patient record system developed by Logan Hospital won the best Information Technology Innovation Award at the 2001 Asia Pacific Queensland Information Technology and Telecommunications Awards for Excellence
- Implemented the Queensland Picture Archiving and Communication System (QPACS) at the Townsville and Royal Brisbane hospitals. It complements systems already operating at the Royal Children's and Princess Alexandra hospitals. The Prince Charles Hospital is upgrading its equipment to be compatible with the system. QPACS enables medical images such as radiology, computed tomography, magnetic

resonance imaging and x-ray images, to be captured and stored electronically so that the images can be viewed anytime, anywhere, and at multiple locations. This enables clinical consultations to occur between specialists at various locations within the system

- Enhanced access to specialist services through the Queensland Telehealth Network which enabled:
 - the Renal and Palliative Care Outreach Program to commence in the Toowoomba Health Service District and provide treatment to patients in Roma via videoconference. Under this program, patients needing specialist treatment require fewer trips to Toowoomba
 - 200 clinical education sessions per month
 - around 300 patients to receive care each month
 - around 20 nursing, medical and allied health specialty areas to use the network for clinical care each month



The Clinicians Knowledge Network provides access to Medline, Cinahl, PsycINFO, over 400 full text medical journals, MIMS, Micromedex, the Therapeutic Guidelines, Medicine, MD Consult, Harrisons and 40 other on-line medical text books.

By the end of 2001-02, on a monthly basis MIMS pages were accessed on 500,000 occasions, Micromedex over 120,000 and the Therapeutic Guidelines 70,000 times.

There were 16,000 occasions where full-text searches of 400 journals researched patient care topics. A large number of these searches were conducted 'out of hours' facilitated by CKN being available via the Internet from clinicians' homes.