



The year in review

The 2003-04 Queensland Health Annual Report goes beyond our responsibility to provide accurate information to the public, Parliament and stakeholders about our activities, accountabilities and performances.

We hope through this review to also demonstrate how and why it has become necessary to advance an innovative strategic plan for the future – with a new vision, mission and corporate structure to be ‘Leaders in Health – Partners for Life’.

Since last financial year, a critical measurement process known as Integrating Strategy and Performance (ISAP) has been developed. It will be pivotal in assisting Queensland Health’s 64,555 employees to further improve our public health system, already independently recognised as one of the best in the world.

Past and future

Queenslanders currently enjoy the second highest life expectancy in the world. But the growing reality is that we may be the last generation to do so.

Health professionals, Governments and communities must be capable of meeting the emerging challenges of an ageing population, rising costs of drugs and new technology, a national shortage of skilled health professionals and 21st century lifestyle issues like obesity and smoking which are negatively impacting on our health.

Increasingly, Queensland is recording some of the highest rates of preventable deaths in Australia.

The new *2004-2010 Queensland Health Strategic Plan* builds on the vision and challenges identified in the *Smart State: Health 2020 Directions Statement* released in 2003. In essence, five strategic intents clearly set out our objectives and detail a range of initiatives over the next six years that will help us promote a healthier Queensland.

In practical terms it represents an unprecedented opportunity to identify and develop new and innovative ways to improve health care in Queensland. For too long, we have allowed the emotive and short-sighted arguments about bed numbers and money to cloud the much-needed

health reforms around workforce shortages and smarter ways to provide better health care to more Queenslanders.

Queensland Health is a \$5 billion health care business and we need to reflect that in our understanding of new and evolving health care needs and how we meet those needs through innovative and more effective ways of service delivery.

We trust that readers will come to see the 2003-04 Annual Report as a turning point in health care in Queensland, as Queensland Health launches into an exciting and healthier future.

Dr Steve Buckland
Director-General