

Section 5 Our people



Our staff profile

Stream	Health	Queensland Health Shared Service Provider	Total
Managerial and clerical	6,718	1,517	8,235
Medical	3,214	2	3,216
Nursing	16,814	17	16,831
Operational	8,289	107	8,396
Trades and artisans	363	0	363
Visiting Medical Officer	245	0	245
Professional	4,767	26	4,793
Technical	1,032	2	1,034
Total	41,442	1,671	43,113

Figures prepared on the Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Indicator (MOHRI) basis as prescribed in the Ministerial Portfolio Statements. MOHRI is a departure from the previous basis used to calculate FTE data. The main difference being that MOHRI does not count contract/agency labour. The Ministerial Portfolio Statements include estimated actuals for 2003-04 whereas the Annual Report discloses the audited actual position at 30 June 2004.

Supporting our workforce

Nursing

Nurse practitioner trial

The nurse practitioner trial continued during 2003 at four sites – three rural and remote and one acute care site. A report outlining recommendations for the role, including needed legislative and policy changes was submitted to the Minister in December 2003.

The role of nurse practitioner allows highly skilled registered nurses to perform extended roles such as ordering tests and investigations, initiating and prescribing some medications and referring patients to other health practitioners. The role provides

additional services to patients while offering enhanced job satisfaction. Nurse practitioners were strongly supported by the communities and other health practitioners at the trial sites.

Rural and remote nursing relief program

This program is a web-based system incorporating a database of relief nurses and an assignment system to match those nurses with planned leave requirements. Nursing staff undertake an educational program funded by Queensland Health to assist them with skills to undertake relief positions in rural and remote areas.

At present, 152 Queensland Health nurses are available to provide planned relief and to date, 257 assignments to rural and remote facilities have been successfully filled.

Nursing scholarships

In the reporting period, 16 scholarships each worth \$12,200 a year for two years were given to encourage people in rural and remote communities to enter the nursing profession.

The Nursing Scholarship Scheme is open to all registered and enrolled nurses employed by Queensland Health. The scholarships encourage professional development in nursing by providing financial support to nurses undertaking post-graduate or post-registration nursing studies. Queensland Health provided \$99,827 in 2003-04 to 66 nurses across the State for these scholarships, to assist with further education.

Employment of new graduate nurses

The State Government is committed to employing 1,500 new nurse graduates over the next three years. As at 30 June, some 595 new nursing graduates had been employed by Queensland Health during 2003-04.

A graduate nurse online recruitment system, developed and implemented in 2001, is used to manage the employment of new nursing graduates every year.

Queensland Health provides \$1,600 per graduate nurse employed by metropolitan or provincial facility and \$3,000 per graduate nurse employed by a rural facility for transition support into the workplace. A total of \$1,350,000 was allocated to this purpose in 2003-04.

Violence Against Nurses Steering Committee

Queensland Health has established a Violence Against Nurses Steering Committee which is to

scholarships to encourage professional development in nursing



report to the Director-General by December 2004. The committee will identify issues and provide recommendations on priorities, strategies for improvements, resource implications and policies to ensure the achievement of safe and healthy workplaces in Queensland Health.

Nursing transition support

The Queensland Health Staff Development Framework was developed to provide direction and guidance in supporting a nurse's career development with the Department. The framework promotes a culture of learning across clinical, organisational and professional practice.

In line with this framework, statewide Transition to Practice Nurse Education programs were developed. These programs cover a large range of clinical specialties and support development of a confident and competent workforce.

They provide relevant education modules, ensuring access to appropriate teaching and learning resources. The modules are provided free of charge to Queensland Health nurses and articulate into relevant university post-graduate programs.

A project opened in July 2003 to identify and trial appropriate and sustainable models to support nurses in rural and remote areas accessing and participating in the Transition to Practice Nurse Education programs.

The programs are now accessible to rural and remote areas.

Medical

Additional Medical Graduates

Queensland has been a key recipient of additional undergraduate medical places. Graduates from these additional places will commence entering the workforce from 2006. By 2010, the number of medical graduates in Queensland will have almost doubled from 230 in 2004 to approximately 450.

Queensland has been presented with an opportunity to strengthen its medical workforce at a time when workforce growth is decreasing and the demand on health care services is increasing. Queensland Health commenced work this year, identifying strategies to best manage the employment of the additional medical graduates.

Specialist Training

Queensland Health currently employs approximately 895 doctors who are training to become specialists. While specialist training largely occurs in metropolitan and large provincial hospitals, the Advanced Specialist Training Posts in Rural Areas Program in collaboration with the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing, provides advanced specialist training across the Northern Zone including Mt Isa.

Rural Medical Workforce

In January 2004, Queensland Health commenced a program which offers doctors, in their second or third postgraduate year, the opportunity to undertake 10 to 13 week placements in rural practices as part of their normal clinical rotations.

The Rural and Remote Placement Program (RRAPP) in collaboration with the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine addresses the current gap in the vertical integration of training from undergraduate through postgraduate years one to three, to vocational training. RRAPP trainees receive high quality training in procedural and other practice skills in a wide range and depth of clinical situations. The rural experience will enhance further learning when the trainee returns to the parent hospital.

Queensland Health provides a pool of junior medical officers for the purposes of providing relief to doctors who are working in rural and remote areas. In acknowledgement of the additional knowledge and skills required, Queensland Health funds the Queensland Rural Medical Support Agency to provide a rural preparatory workshop for the relieving medical officers.

Junior Medical Workforce Education

To support the education of the junior medical workforce, Queensland Health employs Medical Education Officers (MEOs) in 15 hospitals across Queensland. Queensland Health provides funding to the Postgraduate Medical Education Foundation of Queensland for the purposes of supporting the MEOs in their role.

Overseas Trained Doctors

Queensland Health funds the Centre for Overseas Trained Doctors to provide Preparation for Employment Courses for permanent resident overseas trained doctors. Participants of this course are provided with theoretically and clinically based supervised placements.

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Allied health

Allied Health Conditional Clinical Advancement Scheme

The scheme has had 42 successful applicants. In 2003-04, 29 applicants progressed from their substantive position to a higher level based on their clinical expertise and sphere of influence.

Evidence-based practice networks

During the year, networks were developed to support evidence based allied health clinical practice across the State.

Multi-disciplinary workforce

Clinician Development Program

A four-year change management initiative was completed and evaluated. The initiative aimed to create a culture whereby clinicians demonstrated improvements in:

- use of evidence-based practice as a basis of decision making;
- use of a continuous quality improvement approach to care;
- working together in multi-disciplinary teams;
- service integration and communication with external partners; and
- creating a just culture aimed at improving patient safety through a wide range of training and improvement activities.

Oncology Multi-disciplinary Workforce analysis

The first stages of a detailed analysis of the Oncology Multi-disciplinary Workforce were undertaken. It will inform development of an integrated oncology workforce plan.

Reports on the first stages made recommendations on future workforces in radiation oncology, medical oncology and haematology. The report identified an urgent need for service and infrastructure planning to occur in parallel with implementation of the workforce plan.

Multi-disciplinary Workforce for the Care of Older People

This report identified issues such as the inability to recruit trainees to geriatric training positions and the

growth in the number of trainee numbers (identified by the Medical Workforce Advisory group).

It also highlighted the need for improved workforce data which the Human Resource Management Information System Unit is acting on with the Data Audit Project.

The plan recommended a skills mix and workforce analysis of the aged care sector. The methodology for this is being developed in the Radiation Oncology, Skills Mix and Workforce Analysis Project.

Forecast Zonal Workforce Position Requirements Project

This project envisages a model to estimate the number of workforce positions based on future demand forecasts for Queensland Health zones for the years 2006 and 2011.

The model looks only at the total number of staff required to deliver future hospital based acute in-patient and outpatient services based on the current models of care. This is a static model and does not take into account turnover or loss of staff through retirement.

The model uses regression analysis to forecast nurse, salaried medical officer and diagnostic and health professional workforce requirements for the three Queensland Health zones in 2006 and 2011.

The forecasting model was disseminated to each zone's management. The Corporate Office, Health Workforce Planning and Analysis Unit uses the model when running education sessions on future workforce requirements.

The Northern Zone Health Workforce Unit is using the model to tailor education on workforce requirements for particular districts. This will help identify potential future workforce requirements based on increased future demand for services and loss of an ageing workforce.

Mental health

Training resources for the professional supervision and mentoring of allied mental health professionals in Queensland were developed and evaluated.

Identification of competencies, phase 1, and development of learning materials, phase 2, for Certificate IV and Graduate Diploma, trials, evaluation and accreditation of the Professional

creating a culture aimed at improving patient safety



Development Program for Mental Health, were completed.

Office of Rural Health

Sixty-one Queensland Health scholarships were offered in 2003 under the Rural Health Scholarship Scheme. The scheme provides financial assistance to support students during full-time tertiary study in:

- nursing;
- medicine;
- dentistry;
- pharmacy;
- podiatry;
- physiotherapy;
- occupational therapy;
- speech pathology;
- social work;
- radiography; and
- Indigenous nursing.

In 2003-04, 249 scholarship holders were managed by the Office of Rural Health and placed across the State.

After graduation, scholarship holders are contracted to be employed by health service districts in rural health care facilities throughout the State, providing rural communities with essential health services.

- trialling began of a community health system. These systems will reduce duplication, optimise return on investment and speed information relevant to the patient's treatment to the point of care; and
- statewide implementation of the Information System for Oral Health started after successful trials which included testing the system in a call centre environment.

HealthConnect trials

Queensland Health has jointly sponsored two National HealthConnect Program trials in Queensland. HealthConnect is part of the broader initiative Health Online, a health information action plan for Australia. It aims to improve health care and health outcomes through innovative use of health information.

An individual's health-related information is collected in a standard, electronic format at the point of care (such as a hospital or doctor's clinic).

With the consumer's consent, this information can be retrieved as required and exchanged via a secure network with health care providers authorised by consumers to access this information.

Access to complete and up-to-date information electronically allow consumers and their providers to make health care decisions in partnership.

The North Queensland trial commenced in December 2003 involves patients attending Townsville Hospital for elective surgery. The trial has been well received by patients and clinicians in the region. A second trial is planned for Brisbane's Southside next financial year.

support migration from paper-based medical data collection to electronic data collection

Enabling technology

Clinical Informatics Program

Clinical information management/information technology projects support migration from paper-based medical data collection to electronic data collection and development of electronic health records across hospital and community services.

During 2003-04:

- specification, development and testing of 17 clinical and patient administration information systems were progressed;
- statewide implementation commenced for pharmacy, oral health (see below), and emergency information systems, as well as a *Client Directory*;

Public health licensing system

- Phase one of the development of the public health licensing system to replace two obsolete systems, was completed. The new system provides an enhanced single licensing service responsive to the public demand for radiation health and drugs and poisons licenses. It also enables accurate use of information and measures to support legislative requirements.