

Queensland Intensive Care Support & Telehealth Program (QICSTeP)

De-escalation of the Phase 3 QICSTeP Service

The Queensland Intensive Care Support and Telehealth Program (QICSTeP) commenced development in 2020 in partnership with Clinical Excellence Queensland (CEQ) the Statewide Intensive Care Clinical Network (SICCN) and Metro North Health (MNH) as a contingency to mitigate the potential impact of COVID-19 on statewide critical care provision. The service involves providing support and advice via telehealth from intensive care specialists to clinicians managing critically unwell adult patients across Queensland. QICSTeP utilises a specifically designed consultation tool located on the web based [Interhospital Transfer Application \(IHT\)](#) for documenting both the patient’s clinical condition and the advice provided.

QICSTeP is a phased service consisting of three phases enabling the service to be escalated and de-escalated to meet the needs of Queensland clinicians. The phases are described in Figure 1.

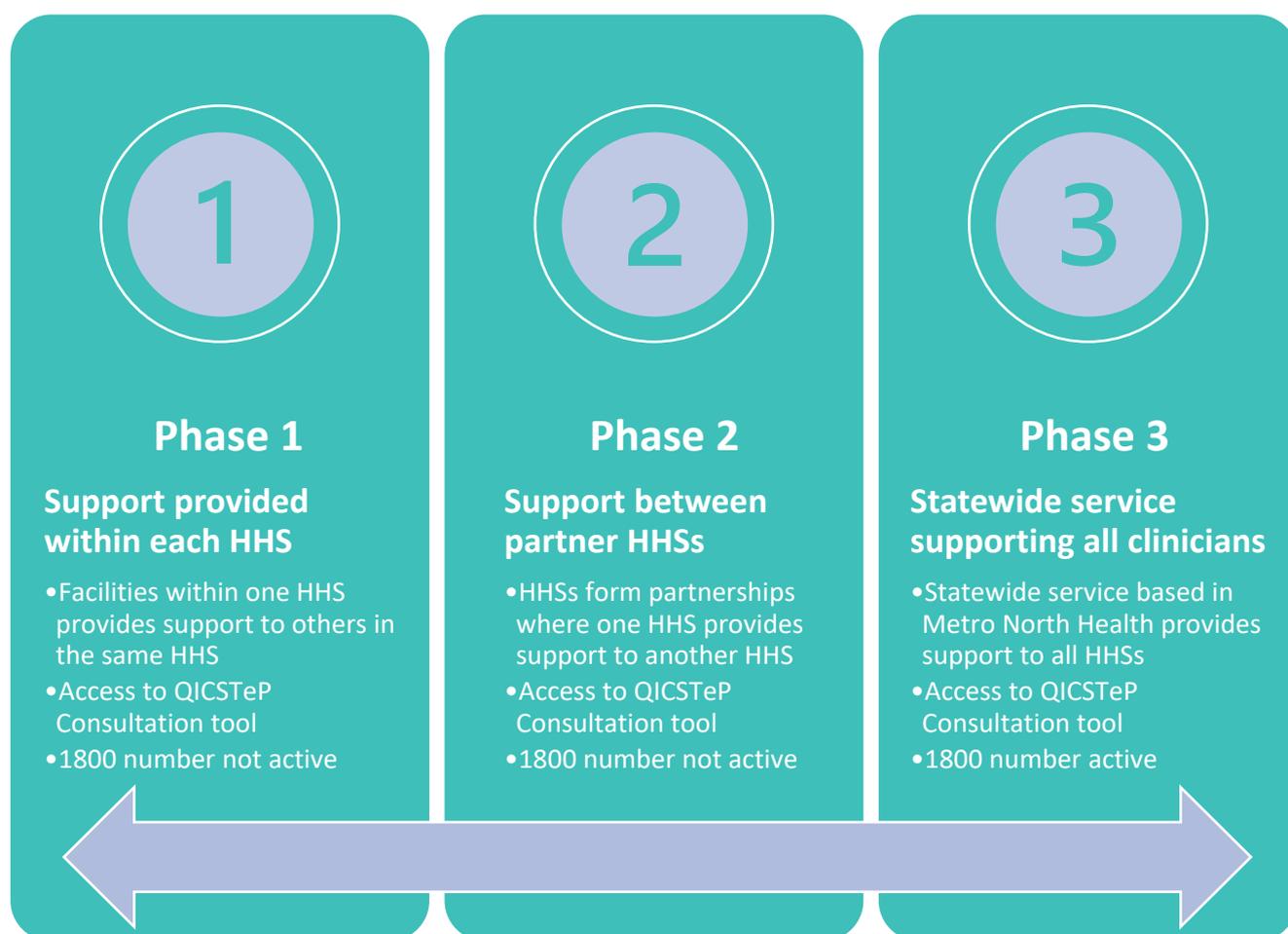


Figure 1. QICSTeP phases

Developed in partnership with

Escalation – 31 January 2022

On 31 January 2022, the Phase 3 QICSTeP service commenced following approval from Adjunct Professor Shelley Nowlan, Acting Deputy Director-General, Clinical Excellence Queensland, as a precaution to mitigate the risk of escalating Covid-19 cases in Queensland following the opening of the Queensland border and the surge in cases of the Omicron variant. The Phase 3 service was operationalised in anticipation of an increased demand for intensive care services, however, this increased demand did not materialise. Despite the lack of demand for the service, operationalising the service enabled recruitment of the operational QICSTeP team and refinement of the operational processes.

De-escalation – 25 February 2022

Based on Queensland's current status with respect to COVID-19, and following discussions with the Chair of the QICSTeP Project, the Chair of the Statewide Intensive Care Clinical Network (SICCN) and key stakeholders from MNH and CEQ, the **QICSTeP Service will be de-escalated from a Phase 3 (statewide) service at 4pm on Friday 25 February 2022**. The service will continue to operate as a Phase 1 or Phase 2 service (see Figure 1) as determined by the needs of specific HHSs. It is important to note that the 1800 phone number is not operational when the QICSTeP service is operating at a Phase 1 or Phase 2 level and clinicians seeking support should follow their local processes for accessing intensive care support form within their HHS (Phase 1) or from a partner HHS (Phase 2).

The evolving situation in Queensland will be continually monitored and a QICSTeP Phase 3 service can be rapidly reactivated if required.

Further information

For further information about the QICSTeP service please contact the QICSTeP team via email on QICSTeP@health.qld.gov.au.

The QICSTeP 1800 phone number is only active when a Phase 3 service is operational

