

# Medical Practitioner Workforce Plan for Queensland

## High level summary of achievements post mid-cycle evaluation

In 2017, the Department of Health publicly released the *Medical Practitioner Workforce Plan for Queensland* (MPWP4Q), demonstrating the Queensland Government's investment and commitment to supporting the medical workforce. The 10-year plan outlined key initiatives and deliverables aimed at building, strengthening and growing Queensland's medical workforce to reflect the health needs of local communities and the changing demographics of Queensland's population.

The MPWP4Q was developed to provide a clear vision and strong framework for securing Queensland's medical practitioner workforce at the time and into the future.

Since the release of the MPWP4Q in 2017, funding of approximately \$5 million per annum has been committed to a broad range of initiatives designed to address medical workforce challenges primarily associated with the maldistribution of the workforce, both geographically and in terms of specialties in undersupply.

The initial iteration of the MPWP4Q identified the following high level strategic priorities and initiatives for immediate action:

- Emergent priority areas
- Shared data collection and analysis
- Strengthening the primary care medical workforce
- Support for the next generation
- Securing a medical workforce to deliver services to regional and rural communities
- Enabling sustainability

Fostering the health and wellbeing of the medical workforce was later included as a key strategic priority.

As the halfway point of the 10-year plan is realised, a review has now been undertaken.

A short overview of each initiative from 2017 to 2022, and its outcomes in addressing medical workforce challenges across Queensland, is provided in the following table.

## Strategic priorities

## Key achievements

### Emergent priority areas

*Investing in and supporting specialist workforces that are currently in, or at risk of, shortage.*

Investment in training and practice capacity in identified specialties including:

- Addiction medicine (3 FTE registrar positions over 2 years)
- Anatomical pathology (2 FTE registrar positions over 2 years)
- Public health medicine (2 FTE registrar positions over 4.5 years)
- Psychiatry (1.5 FTE Director of Training in Psychiatry positions over 4.5 years, 1 FTE registrar over 2.5 years)
- Development of an eLearning resource in partnership with Insight on addiction medicine training

Facilitated enrolment through specialty core requirements by expanding training capacity in the following rotations:

- Paediatric anaesthesia (1 FTE registrar over 3 years)
- Paediatric radiology (1 FTE registrar over 3 years)

### Shared data collection and analysis

*Enhanced collaboration to enable shared identification and understanding of challenges that will need to be addressed by multi-faceted solutions.*

Establishment of the Queensland Health Medical Specialist Colleges Virtual Forum and the Wellbeing Working Group.

Continuation of the Medical Schools Liaison Committee.

Collaboration with the Commonwealth and other jurisdictions in relation to the development of the *National Medical Workforce Strategy 2021 – 2031*.

### Strengthening the primary care medical workforce

*Supporting an appropriately skilled and distributed general practice workforce to meet Queensland's primary health care needs, particularly in rural and remote areas.*

Implementation of the Rural Doctors Upskilling Program (RDUP) to support the development and maintenance of a skilled general practice and rural generalist workforce to meet the medical service needs of regional, rural and remote Queensland.

RDUP has been run over three rounds:

- 2017-2018 - Round 1 - 15 applicants
- 2018-2019 - Round 2 - 6 applicants
- 2019-2020 - Round 3 - 30 applicants

Applicants undertook upskilling predominantly in obstetrics, emergency, mental health and anaesthetics across Queensland.

Strategic priorities	Key achievements
<p><b>Support for the next generation</b></p> <p><i>Promote career options early and encourage graduates and junior doctors into specialties and locations where there is need.</i></p>	<p>Development of the <a href="#">Medi-Nav medical careers website</a> containing detailed workforce information and comparative capabilities for medical students and junior doctors.</p> <p>Launched on 7 June 2019, the site has attracted over 27,898 users and over 217,226 page views as at 30 June 2022.</p>
<p><b>Securing a medical workforce to deliver services to regional and rural communities</b></p> <p><i>Despite significant increases in the medical workforce, shortages in current and projected staffing requirements continue to have a proportionately greater impact on regional, rural and remote health services.</i></p>	<p>Funding investments in two new regional medical pathways to produce home grown doctors and expand training capacity in regional, rural and remote communities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central Queensland and Wide Bay Regional Medical Pathway</li> <li>• Darling Downs and South West Medical Pathway</li> </ul> <p>Establishment of an employment pathway for rural generalists with advanced skills training in mental health in rural and remote communities.</p> <p>Implementation of a Regional Post Fellowship Scheme to support placements for new fellows in regional, rural and remote settings.</p>
<p><b>Enabling sustainability</b></p> <p><i>Investment in Queensland's future medical leaders.</i></p>	<p>Expansion of leadership programs to support the professional development of current and potential medical managers, leaders and supervisors.</p>
<p><b>Fostering the health and wellbeing of our medical workforce</b></p> <p><i>Supporting the medical practitioner workforce via targeted initiatives or interventions which address wellbeing issues and promote cultural change.</i></p>	<p>Delivery of the <i>Wellbeing at Work</i> program (formerly known as <i>Resilience on the Run</i>) to all medical interns across the state. 3,989 interns attended 137 sessions of the program from July 2017 to December 2021.</p>