Message from the Chief Executive

The Clinical Excellence Division of the Department of Health has commissioned Terry Mehan and Deb Miller (Department of Health) to address some issues raised about health services in the Cape region by outside agencies. The team is assisting Torres and Cape HHS, the Department of Health, Apunipima, RFDS and the North Queensland Primary Health Network to work together on the issues. I met with representatives of each agency on 13 May.

The key issues that we have been discussing are:

a) policy direction on the delivery of health services in the Cape,
b) improved coordination of health services,
c) shared clinical information,
d) improved clinical handover,
e) achieving workforce sustainability, and
f) communication of the Clinical Governance and Leadership Framework.

Bob McCarthy, Ian Pressley, Julie Smith and I met with Aileen Addo, the Mayor of Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Council recently. Aileen and I used to work together at the Aboriginal Health Program in Cairns in the 1980s. While in Mapoon, we visited the Mapoon PHCC and met with staff. We also met with the Mayor of Napranum Shire Council and I visited Napranum PHCC and helped farewell Health Worker, Dianne Callope, who has retired after 30 years service to her community.

I’m pleased that the Health Minister has formally announced that nearly $54 million is currently being spent on health infrastructure upgrades within the Torres and Cape HHS. These upgrades are vital in the delivery of sustainable healthcare in our region.

Regards

Jill Newland
Health Service Chief Executive
News from the Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Board

Seated from left: Ms Tracey Jia, Mr Bob McCarthy (Chair), Dr Ruth Stewart and Mr Horace Baira.
Standing from left: Mr Greg Edwards, Councillor Fraser (Ted) Nai and Mr Brian Woods.
Inset: Councillor Kaz Price.

Summary of Board Meeting
The Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Board met in Weipa on Thursday 21 April 2016. The Board met with the Weipa Community Advisory Network to discuss current issues. The Board Chair, Bob McCarthy, together with Dr Jill Newland (Health Service Chief Executive), Ian Pressley (Executive General Manager - South) and Julie Smith (Director of Nursing and Midwifery, Weipa) also visited with the Mayors of the Napranum and Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Councils.

The following items were among those discussed:

• The recent announcement by the Minister for Health that $11.3 million will be spent on urgent infrastructure works. These include:
  o the Thursday Island Hospital Helipad Rectification Project ($500,000),
  o upgrades to numerous non-functioning, non-compliant or overloaded electrical systems across northern PHCCs ($825,000),
  o upgrades to the PHCCs on Poruma (Coconut Island, Masig (Yorke) Island, Ugar (Stephen) Island, Dauan Island and St Paul's Community on Moa Island ($10,000,000). All of these PHCCs are at the end of their useful life and investigations will identify if the buildings are to be upgraded or replaced.
• Saibai Island is the focus of infrastructure works too with improvements to staff accommodation; and the integration of an additional treatment room, new storage space and minor special enhancements to the Saibai Island Primary Health Care Centre.
• The 2016 update of the TCHHS Strategic Plan 2015-2019 was approved for publication. The objectives will be addressed by senior management on a revolving basis at each Board meeting.
• Queensland Government has allocated funding under the Making Tracks Investment Strategy to the TCHHS to meet long term targets for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of closing the life expectancy gap by 2033, and of halving the gap in child mortality for 0 to 4 year olds by 2018.
• The Board noted a new After Hours Call-outs Procedure which describes the safety and security measures to be taken when conducting after hours calls for the delivery of healthcare services on all Outer Islands and at Primary Health Care Centres. This procedure clearly identifies that no health professionals are to attend a call-out without an identified second person in attendance.
• Discussions were held regarding the appointment of interim HSCE, Mr Terry Mehan, from 4 July and the status of the Organisational Review.
• Executive General Manager South Ian Pressley will relocate from Cairns to Weipa in the week starting 16 May 2016. This relocation is one of the recommendations of the Organisational Review and was approved by the Board at the March meeting, and will assist in meeting one of the review’s major aims which is to devolve resources back out to the hubs.
• The Chief Financial Officer reported on the HHS’ current financial situation, and advised the projected end of financial year forecast indicates we will record a small budget surplus.

The next Board meeting will be held in Cooktown on 26 May 2016.

Please email any questions to TCHHS-Board-Chair@health.qld.gov.au
After more than 30 years serving her community, Advanced Health Worker Dianne Callope has been farewelled by colleagues at the Napranum Primary Health Care Centre.

Dr Jill Newland presented Dianne with a lifetime achievement certificate on behalf of the Napranum community, and colleagues contributed to purchase a beautiful farewell gift and a framed photo of all staff. Dianne’s farewell cake was made by local Weipa nurse, Veronica Ah-Shay.

Dr Newland has known Dianne for many years and thanked Dianne for her wonderful service and dedication to Queensland Health.

Dianne is a very popular member of the community and very experienced in managing elder care and chronic conditions.

Dianne has mentored all of the junior staff over the years including Gloria Wallis who is now the Senior Health Worker.

“There is hardly a person in the community who hasn’t been touched by Dianne’s healing hands,” said Gloria. “Dianne has provided a lot of advice and seen lots of changes.

“She also kept us all in line,” Gloria joked.

Dianne also met with the Minister for Health last year who acknowledged Dianne’s contribution to health care.

“Dianne is very artistic and will keep herself busy in her retirement with family, artwork and sewing hobbies,” said Gloria. “And she won’t be a stranger to the health centre. We are her family.”

We all wish Dianne well in her retirement.
Islands will have regular dental visits

Oral health teams will start visiting individual Torres Strait Island communities on a regular basis from July, following a highly successful Dental Blitz in late 2015 and earlier this year.

Director of Oral Health, Yvonne Mangan, said the program of regular visits was the next step in revitalising dental services in the Torres Strait Islands and Northern Peninsula Area.

Last year’s Dental Blitz was conducted on 13 targeted outer islands of the Torres Strait. A total of 488 patients over 16 years old and 802 patients under 16 years were seen. Of these, 207 adults and 295 children were referred for more advanced treatment at the Thursday Island Dental Clinic, with the Torres and Cape HHS paying the travel costs.

“However, this year, instead of flying patients to Thursday Island, clinicians will be able to treat patients and school children in their own island communities,” Yvonne said.

The island visits will be led by Dr Sumit Sachdeva, who is the new Principal Dental Officer for Torres Strait and NPA based on Thursday Island.

He joins the Torres and Cape HHS after seven years in South West Queensland, based at Charleville, and a six-month stint in Weipa.

Dr Sachdeva said the regular island dental clinics had been made possible by the purchase of a state-of-the-art portable dental chair.

“This portable chair is part of a new portable dental clinic that will be transported around the islands to treat patients in their own communities,” he said.

“This is a very innovative way to provide dental services and improve access to oral health in remote locations.

“It is also one of the first times this model has been used in Queensland.”

Remote Area Nurse Solidarity

Staff at Napranum Primary Health Care Centre joined Australians across the country in mourning the tragic death of a Remote Area Nurse in South Australia in March.

Staff wore white bandages to display their respect and solidarity with nurses nationally. This photo unites Napranum staff from Torres and Cape HHS, Apunimpima, Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) and all cultures.

Youngie gains RIPRN

ABOVE: Congratulations to Youngjoo Son (Registered Nurse at Bamaga Hospital) for completing RIPRN [Rural and Isolated Practice (Scheduled Medicines) Registered Nurse] training in March 2016. RIPRN qualifies nurses to administer and supply certain scheduled medicines in rural and isolated practice areas. Youngie (right) is a very valuable member of the team at Bamaga Hospital and always delivers a high standard of care to patients and carers. Youngie is pictured with Naomi Gallagher, DoNM, Bamaga Hospital.

Pictured on page one from left: Stephanie Wallace (Oral Health Therapist), Margerine Newson (Dental Assistant), Dr David Oetjen (Senior Dental Officer), Dr Maleta Seiler (Dental Officer), William Kalo (Dental Student), Eleanor Callope (Dental Assistant), Olive Yusia (Acting Administration Officer), Enid Ketchell (Dental Assistant), Michael Robinson (Dental Student), Dr Sumit Sachdeva (Principal Dental Officer) and Gideon Mina (Acting Senior Dental Assistant).
Men’s & Women’s Health Screening - Aurukun

Thirty-eight Aurukun residents had a men’s and women’s health screening at Aurukun recently. Each participant received a deadly pair of sunnies. Sally Young (A/Clinical Nurse Consultant) thanked all the staff who supported the screen, the JCU students who helped out, and thanked the Queensland Police Service for their support. Contact Sally for more info on 0437 676985.

Medical imaging now at Hope Vale and Wujal

Medical imaging clinics opened in Hope Vale PHC and Wujal Wujal PHC in March. These clinics will enable community members to receive Xray and Ultrasound imaging in their own community. Imaging is performed by staff from Cooktown Medical Imaging with clinics occurring fortnightly. Before this service, patients would have to travel to Cooktown, or further afield, to receive imaging services.

The clinics were made possible by the donation of two high end ultrasound units from Redcliffe Hospital.

“We are very grateful to Tina Hamlyn and the staff of Redcliffe Hospital who freely donated the ultrasound units,” said Steve Wallin, Radiographer, Cooktown. “The units will be put to great use.”

The service has been warmly received by local medical officers and visiting specialists with the improved efficiencies of imaging being available locally.

So far there have been three clinics at each community with about 100 patients imaged. “This brings cost savings in patient travel, healthworker input, organisational time as well as the immeasurable benefits of clients being able to stay in community for medical tests,” said Steve.

A big thankyou to the Hope Vale and Wujal Wujal staff who have been so supportive of this important new service.
21 Health Workers start Cert IV training

Twenty-one Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service Indigenous Health Workers have started training that will allow them to apply for national professional registration.

A further 35 will start the course, the Certificate IV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander (Practice), in July and October.

Torres and Cape HHS Executive Director of Primary Health Care Vonda Malone said health workers who completed the 18-month certificate would be eligible to register as health practitioners with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA).

“This means they will be regarded as health professionals – just like nurses, or doctors or allied health staff – and registered at the national level, which means they can work anywhere in Australia,” Vonda said.

“We have had so much interest in this course, and so many applications, we have had to split the participants up into the three cohorts.

“Completing this course will be a huge professional achievement for health workers and I am very proud we have had so much interest.”

Vonda said the Certificate IV training program was being offered by the Torres and Cape HHS in partnership with the Northern Queensland Primary Health Network and TAFE North.

Torres and Cape HHS Chief Executive Dr Jill Newland said the health service recognised the importance of professional development for health workers and had made a substantial commitment to their training and development over the next three years.

Cooktown Hospital welcomes 51 babies

The Cooktown Multipurpose Health Service’s maternity staff celebrated their second International Midwives Day in May.

Fifty-one babies have been born in Cooktown Hospital since the new birthing unit opened in February 2015 - 25 girls and 26 boys.

Above from left: Cooktown MPHS midwifery graduate trainee Savannah Fry and Clinical Midwifery Consultant Deirdre Murphy with one of the training dolls used by midwives.

Infrastructure funding $54 million

Nearly $54 million currently is being spent on health infrastructure improvements and upgrades within the Torres and Cape HHS.

Torres and Cape HHS Board Chair Bob McCarthy said a new State Government allocation of $11.3 million for infrastructure upgrades in the Torres Strait, along with the $6.3 million allocated for a new modular health facility at Aurukun.

“This is in addition to a four-year, $36.3 million infrastructure works program already under way,” he said.

The funding breakdown for the new $11.3 Priority Capital Funding program is:

- Poruma (Coconut) Island = $2 million
- Masig (Yorke) Island = $2 million
- Ugar (Stephen) Island = $2 million
- Dauan Island = $2 million
- St Paul’s (Moa Island) = $2 million
- Thursday Island helipad = $500,000
- Electrical upgrades (14 sites) = $825,000
Midwifery NEWS
New midwifery students TI

Above: Congratulations to Maletta Seriat (far left) and Monika Kirs (far right) who have been accepted into the Bachelor of Midwifery, Griffith University. Both have shown motivation and commitment to their studies, doing their families and community proud. Victoria Cluff, Clinical Midwifery Educator (second left) and Lyn Wardlaw, Executive Director of Nursing and Midwifery (second right) will support Maletta and Monika throughout their studies.

Graduate midwife

Above: Welcome Kate Jones (right) who commenced in March as a Graduate Midwife. Kate will be rotating between Thursday Island, Cooktown and Townsville where she will gain skills in special care nursery and the Neonatal Intensive Care Unit. Kate is pictured with Victoria Cluff, Clinical Midwifery Educator.

Nurse navigators kick off

Above: Queensland Health Nurse Navigators
Torres and Cape HHS Nurse Navigator, Keiva Heemi, is one of 36 new nurse navigators across Queensland who met in Brisbane recently.

Nurse navigators are highly experienced nurses with a dedicated role of supporting patients with complex healthcare needs to navigate the health system so that they receive the right care they need, when they need it.

Keiva will be working with the Directors of Nursing and Midwifery, and looking closely at the data, to see where the greatest needs in the HHS are.

Working in partnership with multiple health providers and across sectors, nurse navigators provide care coordination, advocacy and education and aim to reduce service fragmentation and improve access for patients across all health services in Queensland.

For more information, contact Keiva on 4226 3021 or TCHHS-Nurse-Navigator-Service@health.qld.gov.au.

Windows 7 done

All staff now have Windows 7 on their computers. Thank you to the eHealth technicians, David Helling, Ian Ross and Iain Wheeler, who have worked on over 850 devices travelling by car, boat, helicopter and plane to reach staff. Thanks also to the TCHHS Windows 7 Coordinators, Kaala Murphy and Kiah Cooper for their efforts during the rollout and lastly, thank you to all TCHHS staff for your patience and cooperation throughout the migration.

Submissions

Please email submissions to: TCHHS-COMMS-MEDIA@health.qld.gov.au
Photos of people need to be accompanied by a signed photo consent form
Phone: Heather Robertson: 4226 5689