Message from the Chief Executive

On behalf of the Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service, I presented a submission to the Public Hearing for the Senate Select Committee on Health recently. The Committee’s role is to inquire and report on health policy, administration and expenditure, and provide a final report to the Senate in June 2016.

Issues I raised with the Committee included the lack of health promotion program funding, the need for aged care funding especially in the NPA, the need to align the funding of Primary Health Care between agencies and gaps in mental health services. These are important issues for the Torres and Cape HHS and I hope they will be considered by the Senate Committee in their final report.

I visited Lockhart River recently and caught up with Wendy Sexton and Shirley-Ann Rowley who were running their Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Inservice Training with staff. Wendy and Shirley-Ann have visited almost every community in Cape York as part of the North Queensland CQI Collaborative Project. The training involved practical sessions with all staff in facilities on incorporating quality into everyday work. Quality is everyone’s business.

I also chatted with staff at Lockhart and at Coen including RFDS doctor Peter Modlmayr.

On a recent visit to Thursday Island I met with staff at the Health Worker and Nursing Forum (story on page 7). I also inspected two major infrastructure projects. Construction has commenced on the new Thursday Island morgue and the Thursday Island ring road is progressing well. Thank you to staff for working around the construction. These improvements are well overdue.

Regards

Jill

Jill Newland
Health Service Chief Executive

Congratulations to Cooktown Multi-Purpose Health Service staff who have won a health service award for excellence in improving patient safety. Story inside...

Above: Jill Newland met with Kerryn Mairu, Gail Smith, Karen Koko and Kaylene Koko at Lockhart River Primary Health Care Centre.

Above from left: Jill Newland met with Cathy McNamara (CNC) and Oliver Hauser (CN) at Coen Primary Health Care Centre.

Above from left: Jill Newland with North Queensland Continuous Quality Improvement Project Coordinators, Shirley-Ann Rowley and Wendy Sexton, at Lockhart River.

Above: Dr Peter Modlmayr, the RFDS doctor, at Coen Primary Health Care
Summary of Board Meeting

The Torres & Cape Hospital & Health Board met in Cairns on 12 November. All Board members attended in person along with Dr Jill Newland and several Executive Officers who addressed parts of the agenda.

The following are some of the topics discussed:

- In an effort to streamline preparation the Board’s Committee meetings, the Board will trial holding all three Committee meetings (Audit & Risk, Safety & Quality, and Finance & Performance) on the one day, starting in December 2015. Meeting dates may be changed to coordinate with audit reporting. Relevant staff will be advised of any date changes.
- Vonda Moar-Malone, Executive Director of Primary Health Care, provided an update on the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategy to enable career pathways for health workers in TCHHS. One aspect of the strategy is to provide an opportunity for health workers to attain a Certificate IV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice or a Certificate III in Primary Health Care. The Board approved the initiation of a quote or tender process to engage a suitable training provider.
- Negotiations are continuing on the installation of morgue facilities on four additional islands in the Torres Strait – Masig (Yorke), Iama (Yam), Mer (Murray) and Mabuiag.
- The Board agreed to proceed further with the Total Asset Management Plan, a document required by Queensland Health which serves to outline the assets and resource limits needed to deliver TCHHS’s business objectives.
- The recent Dental Blitz has been deemed a success. The Dental Blitz targeted patients outside of Thursday Island who required check-ups and non-emergency detail care. It was one of several measures identified in a review of our region’s oral health in 2014.
- The Board welcomed Sandra McCormack to the role of Board Administration Officer. Sandra works in the Board office in the CITI Central building in Cairns along with Board Operations Manager Andrea Brophy.

The next Board meeting will be held in Cairns on 9 December 2015.

Please email any questions on the Board Summaries or the Board to TCHHS-Board-Chair@health.qld.gov.au

Credentialing audit

Gordon Mayne from the Rural and Remote Clinical Support Unit based in Cairns visited South West HHS to help audit the credentialing database, review current processes, and help with the Credentialing Policy and Procedure.

Gordon is helping rural and remote HHS’s fulfill their credentialing requirements. Medical Officers and Dentists must have a scope of clinical practice prior to commencing employment (either as a locum or permanent employee) within Hospital and Health Services.
Fred’s journey from health worker to nurse

Advanced Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker, Fred Tamu, has just completed his final subject in a Bachelor of Nursing.

Fred has been studying for three years externally at Deakin University through the Institute of Koori Education.

Fred has extensive experience as a health worker across the Torres Strait Islands including long stints at Warraber, Saibai, Kubin and Thursday Island. He also recently worked with the sexual health team in Kowanyama and Pormpuraaw.

“I was born on Thursday Island, raised on Warraber and my first job with Queensland Health was as a trainee health worker on Warraber 19 years ago,” said Fred. “It was hard to find the time to study while working full-time and on-call after hours. It can also be a lot of travel when you live in a remote community. Sometimes I had to get to Geelong for block training every second week.”

Fred encouraged other health workers to take up further study. “It opens up so many opportunities as a RN.” Fred also thanked people for their support along the way. “I really want to acknowledge and thank Clara Tamu and Daisy Harry for taking me under their wings. They trained and believed in me.”

Fred hopes to secure a place with the Torres and Cape HHS Graduate Nursing Program next year.

Dr Jill Newland congratulated Fred on completing his nursing studies. “Fred’s vast experience as a health worker will be a great asset once he commences as a nurse. We are very lucky to have someone with his expertise and qualifications in the Torres and Cape HHS.”

Child development training

Child health staff (above) were trained in two best practice screening tools: PEDS (Parents Evaluation of Development Status) and ASQ3 (Ages & Stages Questionnaire) in Weipa recently.

Training was co-facilitated by Jenny Morton (Nurse Educator Cunningham Centre) and Jenny Aspinall (Family Health CNC TCHHS). Participants were trained in the use of these tools, rationale, and evidence-based practice.

These tools have been recommended and researched extensively by the Child Development Sub Network, State-wide Child and Youth Clinical Network (SCYCN) and are considered best practice State-wide. They are being adopted by all HHS’s across the State.

The new Personal Hand Held Record (the Red Book) given to parents of newborns will now have the PEDS tool included in the booklet/folder. This primary screening tool is a parent lead tool and consists of 10 questions for the Health Professional to discuss with the parent regarding their Child’s development. If a secondary screen is required the ASQ3 screening tool is used. This tool consists of 30 questions for discussion with the parent.

This training is for all Maternal, Child and Youth Health Nurses and Health Workers.

The workshop was well received with positive evaluation responses including: “definitely a valuable tool for screening”, “restimulated me to improve my practice”, “good to know what changes are occurring and how they will affect us”, “be more proactive with encouraging the use of the red book”.

The next Training workshop will be held in Weipa first week in February 2016.

Contact Jenny Aspinall, Family Health CNC, for details on phone 40823612.
Congratulations to Colleen Neilson, Advanced Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker, who recently completed a Certificate IV in Practice and is has successfully registered with AHPRA (Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency).

As a registered Health Practitioner, Colleen is now able to claim Government rebates for health sessions with clients. These include smoking cessation, dietary interventions, oral health instructions and fluoride treatments. Colleen encourages other staff to upgrade their qualifications and do the same. “I have always studied to further my qualifications. I already have my Certificate IV in Community,” explains Colleen, “and I upgraded to the Cert IV in Practice so that I could provide more services to our clients.”

Colleen also recently completed a Safe Medication course which involved two weeks of study at James Cook University and clinical work.

Dr Jill Newland congratulated Colleen for her studies and her registration with AHPRA. “Colleen’s further education is enabling her to provide better services to the communities she supports. We have a wonderful team of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and it’s great to see staff enhancing their skills.”

The Learning and Development team are excited about introducing some new training opportunities to Torres and Cape HHS in 2016.

“Our weekly Fruitful Friday training sessions for staff have been a great success in 2015 and we are planning to introduce a greater variety of sessions next year,” said Coordinator Melissa Dalzell. “Topics for next year include:

- Understanding RANIP
- Restricted S4 and S8 Drugs
- Clinical Hand-over
- Wound management and products
- How to promote your program (intranet, Facebook, media).”

Contact L&D to nominate topics or presenters.

Mandatory training matrix and new SARAS guide

The mandatory training matrix has undergone significant changes and now includes a separate tab for all staff; clinical-other; nursing and midwifery; and agency nursing and midwifery to help staff quickly identify what training is mandatory for their specific role. See: http://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/torres-cape/docs/ld-mandatory-matrix.pdf

There are also some new SARAS resources. See http://qheps.health.qld.gov.au/torres-cape/docs/ld-saras-quick-reference.pdf

Training for Admin & Operational Officers

Contact us to find out about incentive funding for Administrative Officers and Operational Officers through the Employee Training and Development Education Incentive Fund.

For more information about Learning and Development call 4225 3026 or email TCHHS-Learning@health.qld.gov.au
Cooktown wins Excellence Award

Above: Some of the staff at Cooktown Multi-Purpose Health Service with the Excellence Award.

Cooktown Multi-Purpose Health Service staff have won a health service award for excellence in improving patient safety.

The Cooktown staff have worked together to make the hospital’s pathology testing management program an example for other facilities.

“With pathology testing, you sometimes have issues with forms that haven’t been fully completed or issues with labelling, which then have to go back to be corrected and sometimes the pathology test has to be done again entirely,” Dr Newland said.

“It can waste time and effort. But the staff at Cooktown introduced a new checklist that they came up with and then ran ongoing education and training sessions for all nursing and medical staff.

“This remarkable group intervention has resulted in a more efficient processing of pathology tests that saves time and money.

“The new training and the new form have reduced the nurses’ workload because they don’t need to chase up patients to repeat the tests.


Integrating care

Two senior Torres and Cape clinicians have joined a statewide conversation to tackle one of the health system’s greatest challenges – integrated care.

Dr Anthony Brown, Director of Medical Services North, and Lyn Wardlaw, Executive Director of Nursing and Midwifery, were among more than 140 clinicians at the Queensland Clinical Senate meeting, ‘Your integration is my fragmentation – building relationships’.

Senate chair Dr David Rosengren said integrated care was often described as one of the ‘holy grails’ of the health care system.

“Almost half of all Queenslanders have a chronic disease and as our population ages, this number will increase,” Dr Rosengren said.

“There is an urgent need for the health care system to be ready for this and integration of care is a critical part of that.”

Delegates at the October meeting identified a number of key themes considered central to effecting change, including:

• Building and strengthening relationships across Hospital and Health Services and Primary Health Networks.

• Progressing integrated governance arrangements to identify a shared vision, strategy and goals, roles and accountabilities.

• Information communication and technology is critical to achieving integration and better outcomes for patients. Access to whole of system data is important to create a burning platform, and inform combined decision-making regarding priorities, investment patterns and new models of care.

Capital works in progress

Work continues on three major projects in the Torres and Cape HHS. Dr Jill Newland inspected the progress of some of these works in early November.

Stage two of the concreting works on the Thursday Island Hospital ring road is just about complete. This is a $1.75 million project and will improve access to the Hospital.

The new Thursday Island Mortuary Project commenced in late October and is on track to be completed by the first half of 2016. This project is $995,000 in value.

Thirdly, the Napranum Primary Health Care Centre’s new consulting rooms are well underway.

Aussie Polapelli

Oi oi oi!

Devendar Polapelli celebrated his Australian Citizenship in style in September at a Swearing in Ceremony with the Family Health Unit Cairns looking on. Devendar celebrated with morning tea the following day with his colleagues.

New Aussie Polapelli arrived in Weipa the week of 21 September and was greeted by Weipa colleagues and celebrated with the traditional colours of Green and Gold with the Australian flag flying. Of course the lunch menu was of the highest calibre with al-a-carte choices – Vegemite and real butter sandwiches – followed by lamingtons and home baked cakes with vibrant green and gold toppings.

When Devendar was asked how do you feel? He responded, “I feel complete, like I’m home.”

Devendar has worked for Torres and Cape HHS since February 2009.

Congratulations Devendar from all of us.

If you’re thinking about quitting you don’t have to do it alone.

CALL 13 QUIT (137848)
More than 40 people attended the first combined forum for Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area health workers and nurses on Thursday Island earlier this month.

Torres and Cape HHS Executive Director of Primary Health Care Vonda Moar-Malone said the forum was the first of many.

“This inaugural forum proved so successful and so well received that we intend to hold regular forums in the future for the Torres Strait region,” she said.

“We have already scheduled the next one for March 2016.

“The forum was a great way of getting nurses and health workers to come together for professional development, as well as building stronger and more effective teams for the delivery of improved primary health care.

“Both the health workers and nurses gained greater awareness and understanding of the critical roles they played within their respective primary health centres, to improve primary health outcomes for the communities of the Torres Strait islands and Northern Peninsula Area.”

Vonda said nurses and health workers worked very closely together in the Torres Strait Island and Northern Peninsula Area communities.

“But they haven’t shared close professional development and networking opportunities in the past.

“Nurses have had their own separate forums and gatherings, as have health workers.

“But for two groups that work so closely together every single day, we thought it would make sense to bring them together for a combined meeting at which they could collectively discuss shared clinical and professional issues.”

The forum, which was held at the Community Wellness Centre on Thursday Island from 2–6 November, focused on a number of key areas including:

• Acknowledgement of roles and responsibilities
• Continuous Quality Improvements (CQI)
• Improving operational efficiencies
• Recognising potential areas of growth
• Mandatory Training including First Aid and CPR
Jenny Godz worked at Bamaga Hospital from 20 August 2012 until 17 July, 2015. Jenny was a valued member of the Bamaga Team and was always cheerful and caring. She was much loved by the Bamaga Community and she is sorely missed. Jenny will always be in our thoughts.

Her pleasures were simple
Her needs were few
If her family was happy
She was too

She gave us love in
the fullest measure
Care, devotion and
memories to treasure

She shared our dreams,
hopes and our tears
Thank you for those
precious years

In loving memory, Jenny’s frangipani tree has been planted and thrives in the Bamaga Hospital grounds.

Senior dental staff plan for better services

Seated from left: Belinda Matthews, Dr Shane Hearps and Dr Ian Swinton. Standing from left: Dr Sumit Sachdeva, Dr Winton Barnes, Jessica White and Dr Yvonne Mangan.

Senior oral health staff from Thursday Island, Weipa and Cooktown met in Cairns in late October for a planning session.

The meeting was led by Executive Director of Medical Services, Dr Winton Barnes, and Director of Oral Health, Dr Yvonne Mangan. The group discussed plans for a more sustainable dental service across the entire Cape York, NPA and Torres Strait Islands region.

From around the region...

Above: Iama (Yam Island) beach scene.

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