Message from the Acting Chief Executive

I am very positive about handing over the reigns of the HHS to incoming Health Service Chief Executive, Michel Lok, on 12 September. For those who have worked with Michel previously you will know he brings the right mix of skills and experience, local knowledge and approachable personality to lead the organisation as we continue to mature.

The Queensland Premier visited Thursday Island, Boigu Island and Mer (Murray Island) in late July. The Premier met with a number of agencies during her visit including the staff at the Boigu and Murray Island Primary Health Care Centres. She was the first Premier to visit Boigu since 1978. It was good for the Premier to have first hand knowledge of some of the challenges in our remote facilities.

On Thursday Island she announced the expansion of the Renal Unit which will soon be able to cater for nine patients (see story on page 5).

I’m pleased that the Board has approved a coordinated diabetes care trial for Thursday Island.

The trial will involve a $500,000 investment in improvements to diabetes care.

In 2014/15, diabetes complications were the largest cause (25%) of potentially preventable hospitalisations. Thursday Island is the largest resident cluster of diabetics in our HHS (409 or 15% of total).

This trial aims to improve community-based diabetes management at Thursday Island, and reduce the number of the trial-site resident hospitalisations for diabetes complications.

Regards

Terry

Terry Mehan
A/Health Service Chief Executive

Farewell Telcy after 24 years

Telcy Moses was farewelled at a morning tea at Thursday Island Hospital last week. Telcy is retiring after 24 years with Queensland Health. All the best with your retirement Aunty Telcy!
News from the Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Board

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

Summary of Board Meeting
Torres and Cape Hospital and Health (TCHHS) Board members met in Cairns on 21 July 2016. Discussion included the following matters:

• Mr Michel Lok has accepted the offer of Health Service Chief Executive and will commence the appointment on 12 September 2016.
• The Chief Financial Officer reported on the financial ledger. A full Finance Report was not presented at this Board meeting due to the timing of the end of financial year. This will be discussed at the August Board meeting.
• The Coordinated Diabetes Care Trial Business Proposal has been endorsed, involving a trial of care for the largest resident cluster of diabetics in TCHHS being 409 residents of Thursday Island.
• The Board noted the work on the Operational Plan to date, with a final expected to be presented at the next Board meeting.
• The Thursday Island Health Facilities Master Plan was presented. This plan will provide a strategic direction for the development of HHS operational facilities located on Thursday Island.
• The final report on the North Queensland Primary Health Care Continuous Quality Improvement Program was noted.
• The formation of a local Clinical Senate was discussed. The HSCE will proceed with a proposal and the Board will hear more at the next Board meeting.

The next Board meeting will be held in Cairns on 23 August 2016.

Thank you Bamaga Hospital

To the CEO and staff of the Bamaga Hospital this is just a short note to thank the staff and Dr Neville Geary for the prompt service and treatment I received at the clinic and the hospital on the 6th and 7th of July this year, while I was on holidays traveling to Cape York.

Excellent service from reception, nursing staff and doctor, and the reception staff at the health clinic. Thank you. I would appreciate if you can pass on my gratitude to all involved in providing the excellent care that I and no doubt the entire community receives.

Thanks again,
John Pierce
Central Sector Supervisor
Southern Grampians Shire Council

You're never too young to get your eyes checked.
Four month old baby Julia had an eye check with Aunty Fabiene Ahwang (picutred) and mum Peta Yorkston (not pictured) with optometrist Cameron Graco on Thursday Island recently. If you're worried about a patient's vision call Ghislaine Wharton on 4030 6003. Symptoms may include a turned eye or inability to focus on an object.
Indigenous Australians experience some of the highest levels of ear disease and hearing loss in the world, with rates up to 10 times more than those for non-Indigenous Australians. Hearing loss can be a major contributor to poor education and to unemployment.

To help tackle the identification and management of hearing problems, 45 staff completed a three-day otitis media and aural health care training program in July. Participants included 34 nurses, two medical students, health workers and Apunipima staff.

The training was held in Weipa and included staff from Aurukun, Napranum and Mapoon.

Denise Newman, Ear Health Coordinator (South) said that the accredited training enabled participants to do a comprehensive ear health assessment, recognise abnormalities, give the patient a comprehensive explanation of findings, document outcomes, and recognise the need to refer to specialists.

The course will be offered in other sites in the Southern Sector of Torres and Cape HHS.

The nationally accredited course is run by BENCHMARQUE, a Registered Training Organisation.

For more information contact Denise Newman on 4226 3058.
Family partnership training
‘power with’ not ‘power over’

From left: Libby Cavangah, Leanne Jones, Vera Assan, Gwen Kemp, Che Stow, Jenny Morton, Annie Warria, Margaret Mau, Kathy Cook and May Laifoo. Away: Mary Binawel

The highly recommended Family Partnership Model training was delivered over five days in April to staff from the Maternal, Child, Hearing and Respiratory Program on Thursday Island and Outer Islands.

The training helps health professionals (in particular those working with children and parents) to actively practice the skills of engaging parents and developing supportive and effective relationships.

The model emphasises the need for skilled communication and assumes that a respectful relationship between parent and health professional is a powerful support in its own right. The overarching theme of the model is for health practitioners to create power with clients, rather than power over clients.

The training is a core requirement for all community child health staff. Key messages in the training include:

• to listen better and for longer
• to explore more by asking more questions
• to enable the client to keep ownership of their issue
• to be respectful and non-judgmental.

The participants would like to express our amazing facilitators; Gwen Kemp (Child Health Team Leader – Cairns Community Health Centre, QLD Health) and Jennifer Morton (Nurse Educator – Maternal, Child and Youth Health, Cunningham Centre) for the opportunity to explore these concepts and embed them into our daily practice.

Hello and farewell to nurse graduates

Welcome to Lua Johnson and Samara Fukofuka who are new graduate registered nurses for Weipa and Napranum (first picture) AND farewell to nursing graduates Alexandra Beasley and Gabrielle Wall (second picture) who have just completed the 12-month graduate transition program at Weipa and Napranum.

To hear about Alex and Gabrielle’s journey over the last year see our story at https://www.health.qld.gov.au/torres-cape/html/news-media.asp

Grants for clinical staff

Torres and Cape HHS clinicians and health workers are invited to apply for Education, Training and Professional Development Grants of up to $1500 for conference, workshop or seminar costs to enhance professional skills.

Download an application form at https://fnqhf.org.au/grants
**Thursday Island Renal Unit to expand**

**Thursday Island’s 16-month-old renal dialysis unit will be expanded to meet the steadily growing demand for services.**

The Queensland Premier announced the expansion at her visit to the Torres Strait in July. She said the unit would expand from the current six patients to nine.

Currently, there are three Torres Strait Islander residents receiving dialysis in Cairns who are very keen to return to Thursday Island if additional capacity was available there.

The $1.43 million expansion will be funded jointly by the Department of Health and the Torres and Cape HHS.

The department will contribute $1.25 million in operational funding, while the health service will contribute $179,000 from its retained earnings for the acquisition of some additional equipment for the expansion.

Additional nursing, medical and support staff would be recruited for the renal dialysis unit. The funding also will allow the Torres and Cape HHS to contract a part-time specialist renal physician from the Cairns and Hinterland HHS.

Nearly 400 Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area residents are currently estimated to have some form of chronic kidney disease and many of these eventually will require dialysis.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Queenslanders also are four times more likely to die from chronic kidney disease than non-Indigenous Queenslanders.

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**Badu school screening**

**The Torres and Cape HHS Mums and Bubs team ran a successful school screening program on Badu Island recently using rigorous community engagement and feedback processes.**

Tagai school principal Kay Ahmat and Badu Island Primary Health Care Centre staff were consulted and then the team visited all the classrooms at the school to explain the school screening. A health promotion event was also held in the community hall to tell residents about the school screening.

Screening was completed within one week.

Volunteers assisted with classroom allocations and helped guide the children to all of the work stations.

The clinical sessions composed of:

- Height, weight, body mass index and haemoglobin
- Eye and dental reviews
- Hearing health checks
- Diet and levels of exercise reviews
- Exposure to smoking
- Social and emotional wellbeing
- Full medical review by Dr Sara Van Tinteren.

All children received a resource pack with healthy messages to take home with the school screening banner logo which was developed by Alick Tipoti local (artist).

Feedback was given to families individually within two weeks of the screening. Feedback was also given to the community, teachers at the school and the inter-agency committee.

The Mums and Bubs team would like to thank everyone for their participation in this successful event.
Staff are being encouraged to update patients’ current mobile numbers as part of an SMS messaging trial at selected Specialist Outpatient clinics in Bamaga, Cooktown, Thursday Island and Weipa.

The six-month trial will help reduce our reliance on mail delivery services and improve communication of appointment reminders. Patients with appointments for these selected clinics will receive an SMS message about their appointment which may be a reminder, or about changing or cancelling an appointment. It is envisioned after the initial six-month trial, SMS messaging will be implemented for additional Specialist Outpatient Clinics in each of the four HHS’s.

Not only will the initiative improve the way Torres and Cape HHS currently communicates with our patients, it will also aim to reduce the rate that patients fail to attend their outpatient appointments.

To assist with helping to improve delivery of appointment reminders and reduce the rate patients’ fail to attend, staff are being asked to encourage patients to provide their current mobile number and, where we already have a number on file, verify that it is correct.

If you have any questions or would like more information on which clinics are being trialled please contact the Strategy, Planning and Performance team at TCHHS-SPP@health.qld.gov.au

Paula Thomason (Lush) (above) will be taking a six month break from the Primary Health Care Information Systems and Support (Ferret) team, to join the NQ Primary Health Network as the Torres and Cape HHS My Health Record Integration officer.

Paula will be working closely with clinicians, staff and patients accessing Queensland Health Torres and Cape facilities to coordinate and improve the awareness, viewing, uploading and usage of My Health Records.

We wish Paula all the best in her new role which will take her all over the Torres and Cape, and we look forward to her returning to the team next year.

Torres and Cape HHS are developing a more streamlined Travel Management Solution which will begin trials at the end of August. We are investigating partnering with other Rural and Remote HHSs to share costs and benefits of this travel solution. We are also partnering with eHealth Qld to develop a Rural and Remote Integrated Corporate Information and Records Strategy to implement solutions across our HHS.

Paul Bullard
Information Communications Technology Project Officer
During the June/July school holidays the Oral Health team hit the road and relocated two mobile dental clinics between Weipa to Bamaga.

The massive move involved driving the state-of-the-art dental drover up from Weipa to Bamaga and swapping it with the current dental van which was shipped down to Weipa.

The mobile clinics are a vital asset to the school dental services and are used to examine and treat more than 100 children each school term.

The change in mobile surgeries means an increased ability to travel between schools in the Northern Peninsula Area district with new school services to begin at Injinoo Junior Campus.

The project was managed by Sean Dawes (Senior Oral Health Therapist) assisted by Stephanie Wallace (Oral Health Therapist) as well as the entire dental team.

A huge thank you goes to everyone involved, especially the Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council for offering a discounted ferry crossing fee and Sea Swift for their fantastic door-to-door service.

The Mobile Dental Van takes the ferry over the Jardine River (left) and the van is well equipped for the rugged roads in remote communities.
Over the last few weeks Weipa Community Services and Family Health Unit have joined together to collaborate and coordinate our participation in Weipa Community Events.

Under 8’s day
Our first event was the annual under 8’s day held at the Western Cape College Weipa Campus in June. This year under 8’s day celebrated its 60th birthday with jumping castles and many activity stalls.

Once again our glitter germs were a huge success and well-received by the youngsters who enjoyed playing with glitter, coloured glue and making glitter germ handprints.

But the real message this activity promotes with the children is hand hygiene. I’m sure we all remember glitter and how difficult it is to wash away properly - a bit like germs and bacteria if you don’t wash your hands correctly before eating and after toileting.

Our group talked about healthy and unhealthy food choices using the food mat tool. The children enjoyed looking at the skeleton, eye, ear, and abdomen models too. Colleen Nielson, Advanced Health Worker, from our oral health team spent the morning talking about caring for teeth.

NAIDOC March
Our second event was the local NAIDOC March with the help of other outreach services and Weipa Integrated Health Service staff.

We marched from Putt’s Palms to the roundabout park area near the Heritage Shopping Centre and our health service group (consisting of Community Services, Family Health, Oral Health, and MH&ATODS) set up a health promotion stall which was well received by participants.

Michelle McDonald, Community Services Manager, secured a donation of fruit to share with the marchers from the local Woolworths supermarket which was really appreciated. It was a lovely morning and thank you to everyone for your support.

Jenny Aspinall
Family Health Clinical Nurse Consultant
Diabetes Week

The Weipa Community Services team promoted and celebrated National Diabetes Week by facilitating a number of activities.

A healthy staff lunch of fresh chicken or falafel and salad wraps was provided. These were served followed by vanilla Greek yogurt and frozen berries. This lunch was very well attended and much appreciated.

The team also held a stall at the local shopping centre for two days. The stall contained a Sugar in Drinks display, free healthy recipe cards and diabetes and blood glucose level assessments were also offered.

The waiting room of Weipa Integrated Health Service was vamped up with Sugar in Drinks and Fat in Foods displays. These provided great conversation-starters and an educational tool for patients and visitors to the facility.

Cardiac Challenge - Cycling Cairns to Cooktown
Help raise money for cardiac equipment in Cairns and surrounding areas - Sept 17 -19
www.cardiacchallenge.com.au

Footy champs!
Congats to the Queensland Health Touch Football team which won the corporate division comp on Thursday Island, beating IBIS in the grand final 6-5!

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 5974