



Queensland Health

Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032

Consultation summary report



Queensland
Government

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Queensland Health acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the lands, waters and seas across the State of Queensland and pays our respects to the Elders past and present.

We value the culture, traditions, and contributions that the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have made to our communities and recognise that our collective responsibility as government, communities and individuals are to ensure equity and equality, recognition and advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland in every aspect of our society.

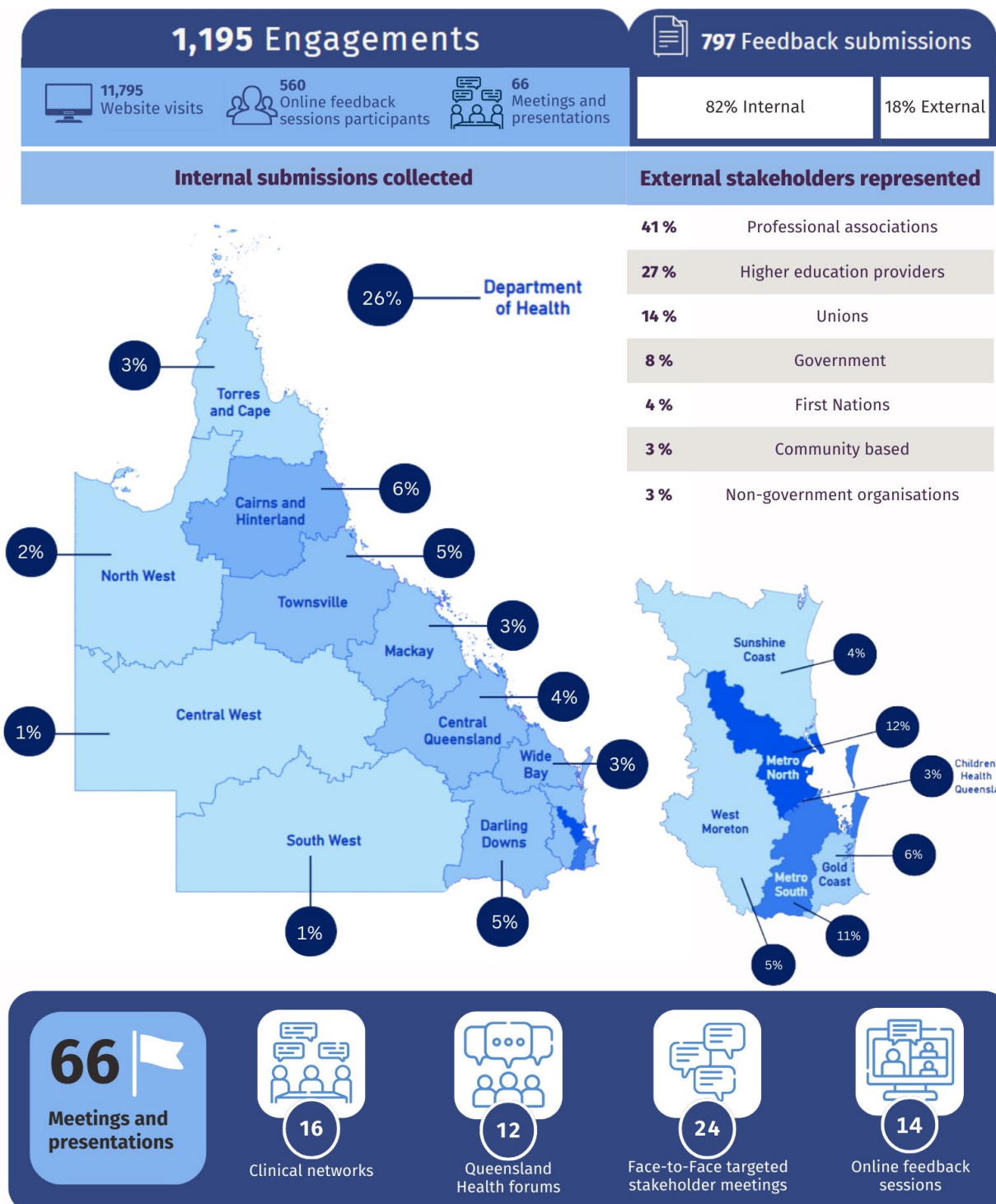
Executive Summary

The Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032 (workforce strategy) consultation paper was released by the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women on 31 October 2023.

Queensland Health then consulted with stakeholders to seek input on the objectives, strategies and actions that will underpin the workforce strategy. Engagement statistics with stakeholders is shown in figure 1 below. In summary, during the consultation period:

- There were 11,795 website visits and the consultation paper was downloaded 2,172 times.
- Over 790 email feedback submissions have been received.
- 14 online staff feedback sessions were held, with 560 Queensland Health staff participating.
- 66 internal and external stakeholder meetings were held.

Figure 1



What we heard – key findings

During consultation, stakeholders expressed support for a refreshed workforce strategy and retaining the three focus areas outlined in the workforce strategy consultation paper.

Feedback from stakeholders has been categorised into grouped themes in line with the three focus areas, as follows.

Focus area 1 – Support and retain the current workforce

- Improving workplace culture.
- Enhancing leadership capabilities, at all levels.
- Supporting psychological safety.
- Promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion in the workplace.
- Improving permanent employment opportunities.

Focus area 2 – Build new pipelines of talent

- Enhancing opportunities in rural and remote locations including accessible and future fit accommodation.
- Streamlining recruitment and onboarding processes.
- Promoting health careers and Queensland Health's branding as an employer of choice.
- Increasing First Nations workforce.
- Encouraging greater collaboration across professions.

Focus area 3 – Adapt and innovate new ways to deliver

- Improving technology to reduce administrative burden.
- Sharing innovative ideas across the system to avoid duplication of effort.
- Supporting digital capability.
- Improving IT infrastructure and technology.
- Collaborating with primary health providers.

Analysis Methodology

Methodology

The data analysis process involved the collection of 797 responses from 1,195 engagements, resulting in over 10,000 points of feedback.

Familiarisation and Coding

Thematic exploration of the feedback received was conducted where common links and abnormalities were flagged in the initial inductive analysis phase. Automations and language extraction models were then developed to continuously collect and cleanse datasets and consolidate feedback.

Development of themes, validation and mapping

Themes were developed under each focus area and were reviewed and re-aligned with the growing datasets. Each actionable point mentioned within the feedback was segmented, using language analysers. Machine learning models were then established to classify each point to the various themes.

Interpretation and formatting

Once all collated, language models with Azure Open AI (OpenAI) were used to consolidate the language and wording of each of these feedback points, with no intent removed. A matrix of themes, action points, summaries, and focus areas were reported through graphs and visualisations.

The analysis was conducted within the local Workforce Strategy Branch's developer environment and the data was not used to improve OpenAI models nor was the data shared with third-party products, services, customers, or Microsoft. This approach aligns with the evolving role of machine learning in data analysis, which is a growing feature in many organisation's processes.

Key stakeholders

Queensland Health acknowledges our key stakeholders involved in the consultation process and extends its appreciation for the input and feedback received on the workforce strategy consultation paper. The invaluable insights shared through the consultation will inform the development of the workforce strategy.

We extend our thanks to the following groups:

- Clinical networks, inclusive of the health consumer representatives and other external Queensland Health members
- Community based organisations
- Government organisations and agencies
- Health Consumers Queensland
- Health sector peak bodies and professional associations
- Health sector unions
- Higher education providers
- Non-government organisations
- Primary health networks
- Queensland Health staff

Feedback methods

Online feedback sessions

12 online feedback sessions were held between 23 November and 4 December 2023 with 333 staff from HHSs and the Department participating. Mentimeter was employed in these sessions to facilitate the creation of surveys aimed at gathering feedback from participants, enhancing engagement and interactivity throughout the sessions.

In January 2024, a further two online feedback sessions were held with 227 staff from HHSs and the Department attending and providing online feedback in response to the emerging themes and potential actions.

Ministerial health workforce roundtables

The Minister facilitated three health workforce roundtables at Ipswich Hospital, Cairns Hospital and Townsville University Hospital; engaging directly with staff to gain insight into critical areas for improvement and proposed innovative solutions to address prevailing issues.

Feedback from these sessions reinforced the key findings:

- Improving workplace culture and focusing on staff retention.
- Enhancing leadership capabilities, at all levels and improving access to training and development, particularly for regional, rural and remote locations.
- Ensuring accessible and future fit accommodation.
- Supporting innovation.

Meetings and presentations

Engagement with external stakeholders throughout the consultation period through various channels, including meetings with those identified in the table below. Our external stakeholders and partners have provided invaluable insights and perspectives.

Queensland Health Forums and Clinical Networks actively participated in discussions on the proposed workforce strategy. The diverse range of perspectives and insights through these enriched the dialogue, fostering a comprehensive understanding of the challenges and opportunities in healthcare delivery. This collaborative approach has not only strengthened the foundation of the workforce strategy but has also laid the groundwork for effective implementation and continuous improvement in the Queensland health system.

Written feedback submissions

Visitors to the workforce strategy consultation site were given an option to respond via written submissions to questions outlined in the online feedback survey. 797 submissions were received from individuals and the following organisations:

Consultation Summary

Stakeholders were presented with a range of ideas and strategies relevant to each focus area and invited to share actions they felt would support their implementation across the system. The webinar sessions and face-to-face meetings allowed for round-table discussions to take place and a pathway for direct feedback was available for individuals and organisations wishing to provide free-form input.

The feedback has been collated, coded, and grouped into themes under the relevant focus area. Responses reflect a range of recommendations aimed at addressing the complex challenges facing the health workforce in Queensland. Stake

holders have emphasised the importance of working collaboratively to find solutions to the workforce challenges. Feedback highlighted the significance of boosting First Nations workforce representation, enhancing engagement and personalisation of care, having a supported and skilled workforce, contemporising health care, and embedding sustainable health workforce supply channels.

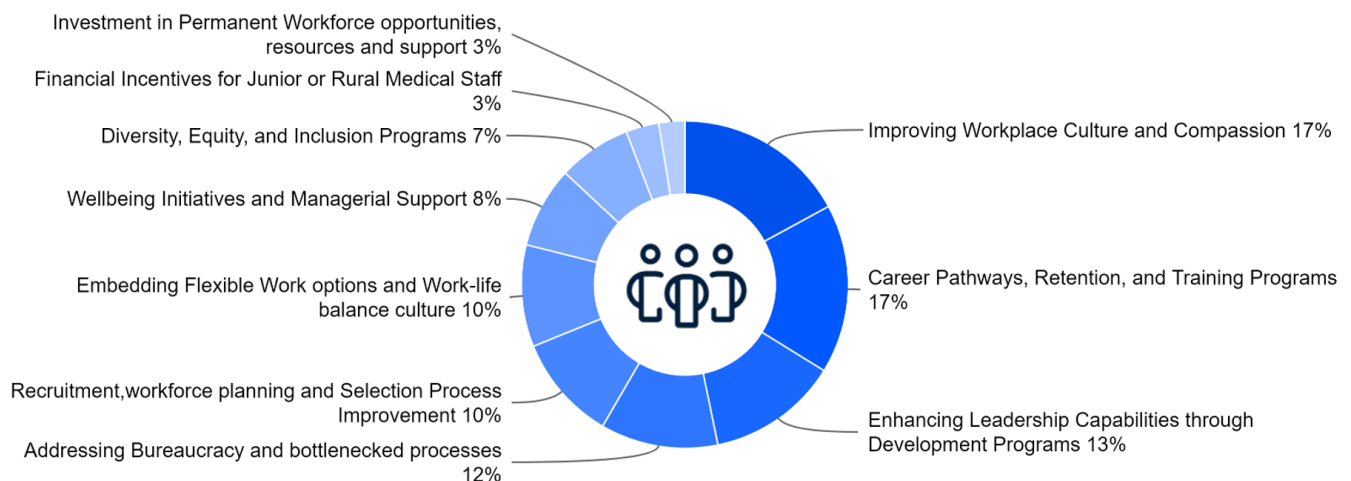
Key results

The three focus areas formed the basis of the consultation and the development of this consultation report. Stakeholders agreed these areas remain a focus of attention in addressing the health workforce challenges.

The top ten themes emerging from the feedback has been highlighted for each of the focus areas. Workforce strategies have been identified to address the themes.

Focus area 1: Support and retain the current workforce

Top Themes Focus Area 1 – Support and retain current workforce



“Overworked staff should not be responsible for training new staff, as this often leads to **inconsistent training**”

“Allow recruitment above establishment to support **planning for retiring staff**”

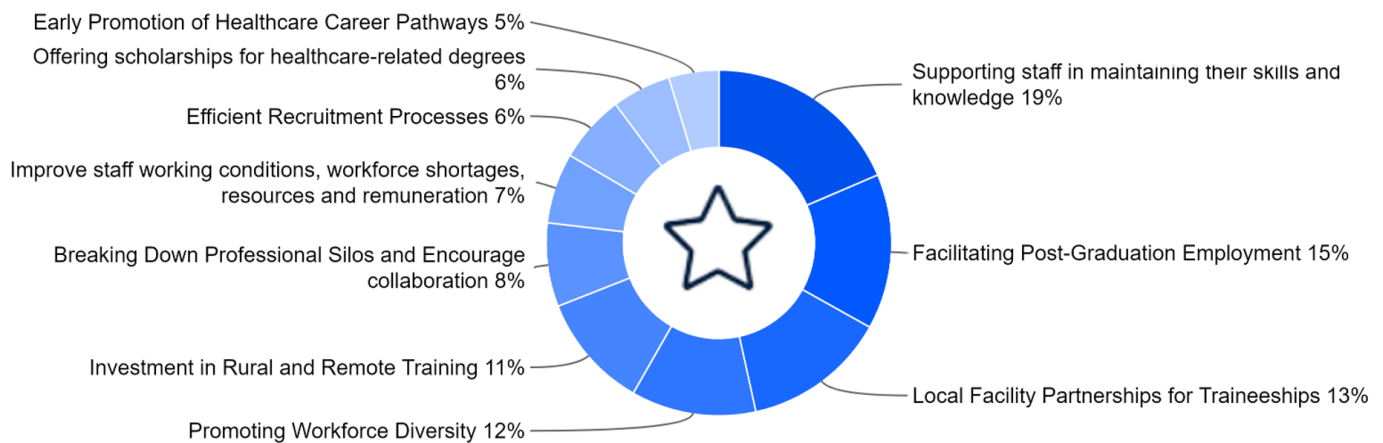
Creating positive work environments and improving the employee experience featured significantly in this focus area. The message for employers is to strengthen the support of the existing workforce by prioritising wellbeing and supporting career and leadership development.

Strategies to support and retain the current workforce

- Implement targeted initiatives to improve workplace culture with a focus on diversity, equity and inclusion.
- Strengthen leadership capabilities through targeted development programs.
- Provide structured career and professional development opportunities for staff, including improved education and development program access for rural and remote staff.
- Embed flexible work options to support work-life balance.

Focus area 2: Build new pipelines of talent

Top Themes Focus Area 2 – Building new pipelines of talent



“Make rural placements **affordable**”

“We are currently burning people out by increasing **student placement demands**”

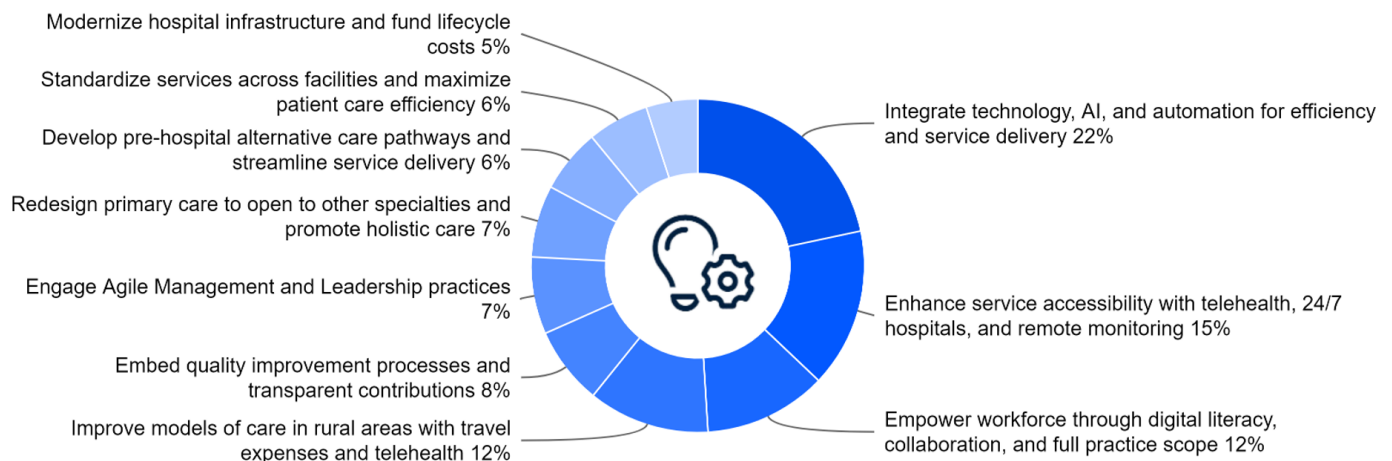
Building on existing talent pipelines and developing new sources of talent with a focus on target priority areas featured significantly in the feedback. Stakeholders were clear on the barriers currently hindering the success of student placements and traineeships, identifying this as an obstacle in building new pipelines of talent.

Strategies to support building new pipelines of talent

- Promoting health careers for existing workforce that support a multi-disciplinary team approach to improve outcomes for patients.
- Optimising student placements including Post-Graduates and Traineeships by partnering with universities and the Vocational Education and Training sector.
- Enhancing career pathways and support, with a focus on attaining healthcare workers in areas of need.
- Attract and grow our First Nations workforce across the state to provide culturally safe and responsive health care to First Nations people, their families and communities.

Focus area 3: Adapt and innovate new ways to deliver

Top Themes Focus Area 3 – Adapt and innovate new ways to deliver



“Improve technology and systems to help staff **access information and services**, especially in rural and remote areas”

“Implement programs that enhance **digital literacy skills** among staff ensuring they have the confidence to effectively use **technology**”

Stakeholders want to see a system that enables people to create new ways of working now and into the future. Feedback highlighted the need for innovation and creativity and adopting and integrating technology as well as build digital capability.

Strategies to support adapting and innovating new ways to deliver

- Integrating technology, Artificial Intelligence (AI) and automation to enhance service delivery and accessibility.
- Supporting multi-disciplinary teams in the development and implementation of new models of care.
- Strengthen relationships with stakeholders across the health system to collaboratively build workforce capability and capacity.
- Empowering workforce through digital literacy, collaboration, and full practice scope.

Conclusion

To address complex challenges, the workforce strategy's effectiveness hinges on implementing immediate, medium and long-term sustainable workforce initiatives. In addition to this, a structured governance approach is needed to establish priorities and promote comprehensive whole-of-system collaboration.

Collated and analysed feedback and submissions received throughout the consultation period will be used to inform the development of the workforce strategy. Feedback will also be shared with system stakeholders across Queensland Health. This will be an opportunity for relevant senior responsible officers to consider the stakeholder insights through the feedback submitted and possibly inform future initiatives and/or activities in the respective areas.

It is anticipated that the workforce strategy will be released mid-2024.