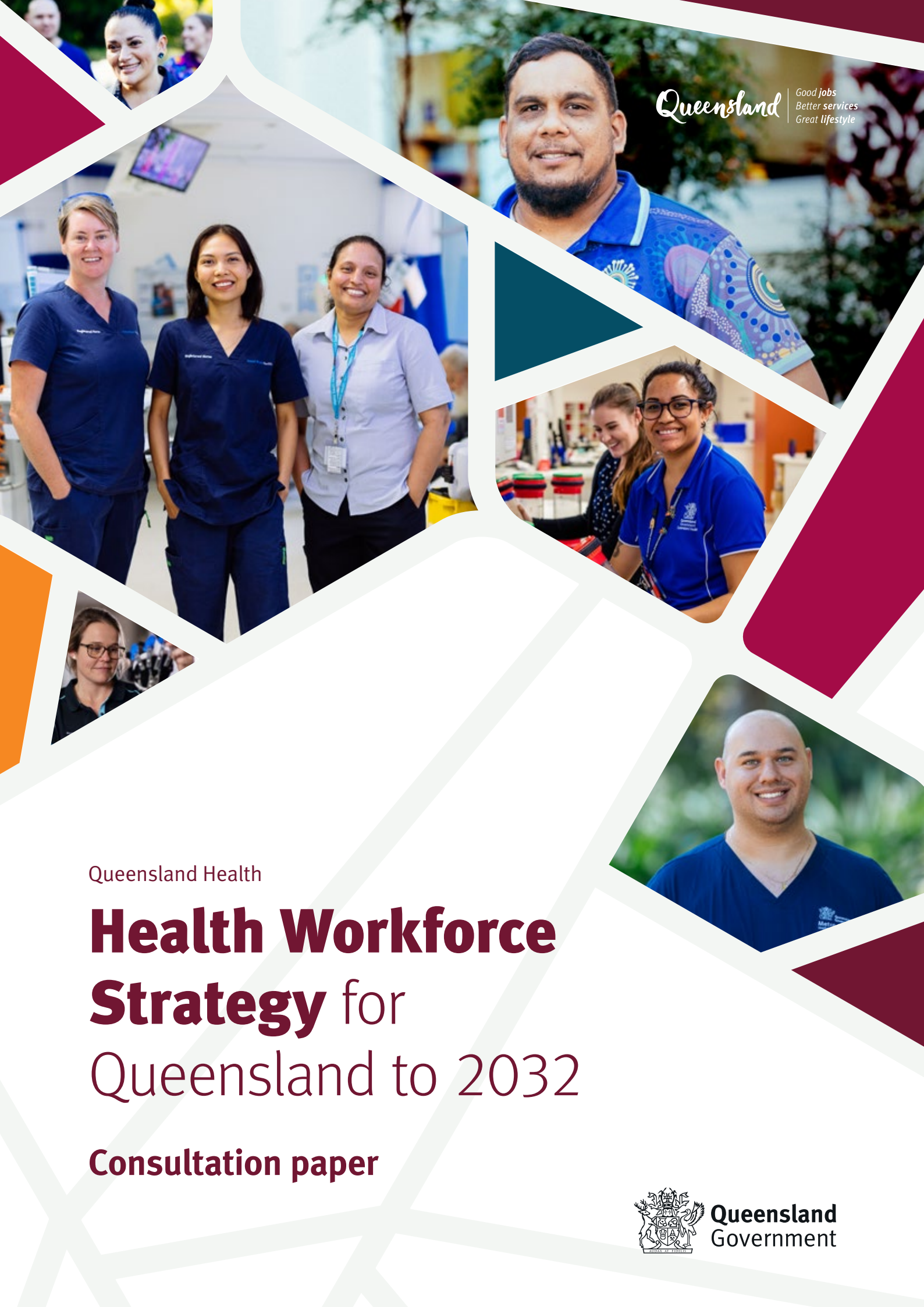


Queensland

Good jobs
Better services
Great lifestyle



Queensland Health

Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032

Consultation paper



Queensland
Government

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Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032 Consultation Paper

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander viewers are warned that
the following program may contain images of deceased persons.

"Making Tracks" Artwork produced for
Queensland Health by Gilimbaa.

The Queensland Government respectfully acknowledges the First Nations peoples in Queensland and acknowledges the cultural and spiritual connection that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have with the land and sea.

We respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander people as two unique and diverse peoples, with their own rich and distinct cultures, resilience and strengths. We specifically acknowledge the unique history and cultural heritage of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the First Peoples of Australia.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present. We are dedicated to the inclusion of cultural knowledge and values as critical factors in the development, implementation and evaluation of strategies and actions to support First Nations people. We respect the cultural rights afforded to Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples under the *Human Rights Act 2019*. We acknowledge and thank the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who contributed to the development of the Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032.



11%

of the workforce is currently aged 60 and over

124,843

total workforce

22,814

Queensland Health employees are temporary

7.2%*

of our permanent workforce left Queensland Health in the past year

40.8%

workforce increase between 2015 and 2023

7,331

of Queensland Health employees are casual

Approximately 70% of our budget goes on workforce

Queensland Health's current workforce at a glance

In the last few years, there has been unprecedented strain on healthcare, as systems strived to balance their response to the COVID-19 pandemic as well as continue to deliver essential healthcare services. In Queensland we are fortunate to have a skilled and dedicated workforce that worked tirelessly to deliver quality health services when and where they were needed. A generally tightened labour market, together with changing perceptions about healthcare jobs, an ageing workforce, and increasing competition with the aged care and disability sectors, have combined to add pressure to the existing health workforce and to workforce supply pipelines.

- Queensland's population as at 31 March 2023 was 5,418,000 with a growth rate of 2.3 per cent from previous years.
- For the year ending 31 March 2023, Queensland experienced a population growth of 31,070 which was attributable to interstate migration. The largest proportion of population growth was overseas migration which saw a population increase of 70,203.
- Queensland's population is projected to grow to 6,079,000 by 2031.
- The population is expected to grow by 1.5 per cent annually to 2031-32 with the population aged over 70 (who are more likely to need hospital care) projected to grow faster than any other age group at the rate of 3.8 per cent annually.
- During this period the number of people over 70 is expected to increase from 600,000 currently to more than 880,000 by 2031.
- Queensland's median age was 38.4 in 2021. The median age is expected to continue to increase with a projected median age of between 40.4 and 42.5 years by 2041.
- Analysis of patient demand on hospital services showed that between 2018-19 and 2022-23, hospital activity increased by 17.3 per cent, or around 4.1 per cent per annum.
- Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, hospital admissions in Queensland had seen a consistent growth of 5.0 per cent per annum. The growth in admissions stalled following the onset of the pandemic but is returning to pre-existing trends.
- Driven by population growth and ageing, and increasing patient complexity, hospital activity is anticipated to grow by 4.9 per cent per annum over the next 5 years.
- Over the next 10 years, Queensland will need up to 45,000 additional staff working in the health system.

Current health workforce

Our workforce	
73.7% identify as female	2.5% identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander
26.1% identify as male	2.2% have a disability
0.2% identify as non-binary	1.8% are LGBTQI+
13.9% are culturally and linguistically diverse	

Our generations	
0.4% are Builders	39.3% are Generation Y
13.1% are Baby Boomers	15.3% are Generation Z
32.3% are Generation X	

Our employment arrangements	
93,834 are permanent (75,177.80 FTE)	7,331 are casual (3,325.97 FTE)
22,814 are temporary (20,561.06 FTE)	864 are on contract (414.95 FTE)

Our working arrangements	
71.3% are employed in clinical roles	51.6% of staff work full-time
9.7 years is the average employment duration	

Source: MOHRI Quarterly data as at 17 September 2023 – Queensland Health including Queensland Ambulance Service
All figures are provided based on headcount

Our aim is to build a supported workforce to deliver high-quality healthcare across Queensland.

Achieving our aim will support Queensland Health to improve the way we grow and retain our workforce and continue to deliver quality healthcare across Queensland.

System reform foundations for achieving this vision:

- Publicly delivered healthcare that is universally accessible
- Flexible, future-fit infrastructure that enables world-class healthcare
- Adaptable and sustainable funding and commissioning approach
- Integrated and accessible technology, digital health and analytics
- Authentic partnerships
- Leadership, culture and governance that supports excellence and change
- Industrial framework for a fair and safe workplace.

We recognise that our workforce will be the key factor in our ability to deliver the highest quality service and health outcomes for all Queenslanders.

System challenges

Health workforce is a global and national priority. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates a projected shortfall of 10 million health workers by 2030. Additionally, countries will face difficulties in the education, employment, deployment, retention, and performance of their workforce*. For Australia, there is the dual challenge of workforce shortages and distribution.

Health and social services is the second fastest growing industry in Queensland, behind accommodation and food services**. With an increase in bed numbers by over 2,000 by 2028, a significant forecast of staff in all disciplines, including medical, nursing, allied health as well as operational and administrative streams is required.

Queensland requires a whole-of-health system approach to institute sustainable change. The quick and successful innovative ways of working developed during the COVID-19 pandemic need to be adapted to meet the workforce pressures of the future.

*Health workforce (who.int) 2023
www.who.int/health-topics/health-workforce

**ABS Job Mobility — Australia (February 2022)

We are listening

A number of workforce issues have been identified by our stakeholders:

- Start from a position of strength with the existing skilled and dedicated workforce, we need to recognise and value our people.
- Leverage the new ways of work learned from our response to the COVID-19 pandemic — the quick transitions to different service models such as telehealth and integrated care, and the rapid reassignment of staff required to meet demand, to meet future challenges.
- Value, invest and grow our First Nations health workforce in order to improve health outcomes for First Nations Queenslanders by delivering culturally safe, responsive, and equitable care.
- Support our workforce to work across continuum of care and support cross-sector collaboration, that will improve health system integration.
- Prioritise the growth and retention of our rural and remote workforce to address critical workforce maldistribution.
- Mitigate factors impacting the health and wellbeing of our workforce, such as fatigue and increasing workloads. For clinical staff, it was highlighted that workloads are also impacted by the administrative responsibilities they carry.
- Improve our mental health, alcohol and other drug workforce capability and sustainability.
- Fix the current protracted, complex and duplicative recruitment processes.
- Ensure our workforce keeps pace with new and emerging models of care due to advances in medical and communication technology, and the changing disease profile in response to consumers wanting better access to faster more tailored healthcare services.
- Facilitate student placements in a variety of areas, including rural and remote as well as consider the needs of students in our student placement model.
- Establish sustainable pipelines of talent and clear career pathways.
- Grow and support workplace diversity to enrich our organisation, reflect our community as well as provide better and more responsive health services.
- Modernise roles, service delivery and technology; maximise full scope of practice; and unlock new pipelines of talent that keep up with industry demand.
- Improve support, wellbeing and retention of staff through flexible work arrangements and increased permanent employment opportunities.
- Support multi-disciplinary workforces to implement local interventions.
- Improve partnerships with education and training providers as well as professional bodies to build workforce capability and capacity.
- Prioritise leadership uplift at all levels to improve culture and retention.
- Focus on preventative healthcare measures to reduce inpatient care burden in the long term.
- Acknowledge the expertise of our healthcare professionals by supporting a shared clinical decision-making approach.
- Enhancing educational and training pathways to strengthen the ability for regional and rural Queenslanders to train and work in their local community.

Our future

The proposed *Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032* outlines the approach to building a sustainable health workforce. It will have a focus on Queensland Health’s workforce while recognising the need to boost primary health and community care services across an integrated health service system.

There are three proposed focus areas, supported by objectives, strategies, and actions:

1. Supporting and retaining our current workforce
2. Building new pipelines of talent
3. Adapting and innovating new ways to deliver

These focus areas were key themes identified at the Queensland Health Workforce Summit, held 27 September 2022, and supported through ongoing engagement with key stakeholders from community and industry groups, unions, Hospital and Health Services (HHSs) and our current health workforce. Identified strategies aim to address current and future workforce challenges across the health and social services system. Building our First Nations, mental health, rural and remote workforces are key priorities for Queensland.

The following factors will be critical to our success

Leadership and culture

Leading cultural change effectively

Supported innovation

Championing innovation while supporting employees through change

Partnerships

Collaborating with stakeholders and partners

Systems thinking

Responding to systemic barriers and enablers

Sustainable workloads

Implementing long-term solutions for sustainable workloads, wellbeing and flexibility

Digitisation

Integrating technology and building digital capability

Redefinition

Challenging traditional models and places of care

Empowerment

Harnessing the know-how and ideas of the workforce

Innovation and creativity

Leading new pathways and methods

Workforce distribution

Strengthening rural and remote workforce pipelines

Outcomes to be achieved through implementation of the workforce strategy

1. A valued and empowered workforce that is designed, enabled and skilled to deliver world class healthcare where and when needed.
2. Culture, leadership, and workforce management practices that support the workforce and promote retention across all roles and locations.
3. Sustained increases in health workforce supply through the establishment of new health workforce supply channels, and the enhancement of existing ones.
4. Contemporary approaches to job and workforce design to support innovative, responsive, technology-integrated models of care.

The workforce strategy proposes system-wide actions to support its implementation. The overarching workforce strategy will be supported by a suite of additional action plans specific to identified workforce cohorts across the system, as shown on the following page.

Action plans that support the overarching *Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032*



Queensland Ambulance



Palliative Care and End-of-Life



Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs



First Nations



Surgical Services



Rural and Remote



Women’s Health



Nursing



Allied Health



Midwifery



Oral Health



Administrative



Medical



Operational

Action plans will be developed for all workgroups, noting some plans above have been developed or are being progressed.

Focus area 1

Supporting and retaining the current workforce

Our people are the most important factor in our ability to deliver quality healthcare.

Objectives

- Inclusive and psychologically safe workplace cultures that support workforce flexibility and wellbeing.
- Value our workforce through empowering staff to work effectively.
- Enhance workforce capability and support continuous learning and development.
- Strengthen leadership and career development opportunities.
- Inclusive and equitable employment practices that achieve gender pay equity.



Strategies

1. Support the workforce through the development of wellbeing initiatives incorporating education and flexibility.
2. Develop and implement workforce mobility initiatives that support rural and remote employment and professional development.
3. Create new opportunities for the sustainable employment of the First Nations workforce.
4. Support sustainable employment of:
 - multicultural workforce
 - people with a disability
 - LGBTQI+ workforce.
5. Implement leadership development programs and culture enhancement initiatives.
6. Provide equitable access to structured career and professional development opportunities.

Actions

- Implement a positive workplace culture to support flexible work opportunities, well-designed work, the physical and psychological safety of the workforce, and balanced workloads.
- Explore career pathways which create seamless opportunities across the health and social system.
- Develop and grow leadership capability in the First Nations workforce.
- Increase permanent employment opportunities for our existing temporary and casual workforces.
- Consider staffing and skill mix requirements across all streams to meet projected growth and demand.

Focus area 2

Building new pipelines of talent

We recognise the need for innovation and new approaches to increase the supply of a skilled health workforce.

Objectives

- Meet health workforce demand through effective management of workforce supply channels.
- Utilise innovative, new and emerging health roles to better respond to service needs.
- Boost First Nations workforce representation.
- Boost multicultural workforce representation rates to reflect population representation rates.
- Establish Queensland as a preferred place to work and meet workforce expectations related to this status from attraction through to employment.
- Implement policies that not only enhance the workforce capacity of Queensland Health but also assists employers across the continuum of the health system to have a highly skilled workforce delivering care when and where needed.



Strategies

1. Optimise student placements by establishing clear pathways to employment across Queensland.
2. Expand grow your own, localised education to employment pathways to retain local talent within the same region, with a focus on:
 - First Nations workforce
 - rural and remote workforce.
3. Use contemporary attraction approaches to build the pipeline with a focus on areas where workforce supply is challenged.
4. Streamline and modernise recruitment methods and strengthen candidate care and on-boarding processes.
5. Partner with universities and the Vocational Education and Training (VET) sector to increase student intake numbers across professional groups.
6. Use evidence-based methods to pursue the development of new and emerging clinical, interdisciplinary, generalist and clinical support roles in collaboration with stakeholders.

Actions

- Overhaul recruitment processes.
- Build sustainable workforce supply pipelines.
- Prioritise growth and retention of our:
 - First Nations workforce
 - mental health workforce
 - rural and remote workforce.
- Enhance attraction and retention incentives offered to support and attract our health workforce.
- Enhance scholarships and education support to increase uptake of health courses.

Adapting and innovating new ways to deliver

In addition to supporting and maximising the health workforce we must optimise the way we deliver healthcare.

Objectives

- Utilise workforce design solutions that support and enable contemporary models of care and support workforce transitions to agile new ways of working.
- Progress our ability to identify and scale up successful new workforce models.
- Enable the integration of technology to improve and streamline service delivery.
- Grow partnerships with the broader social services sectors and the education and training sectors, to contribute to strengthened agile workforces.



Strategies

1. Support multi-disciplinary workforces in the development and implementation of new models of care.
2. Design digitally enabled, and innovative 'place-based' workforce design solutions for regional, rural, and remote service delivery.
3. Incorporate technologies and digital skills competency into professional development and training programs.
4. Strengthen Queensland Health relationships with stakeholders across the health system to collaboratively build workforce capability and capacity.

Actions

- Develop workforce models and arrangements that enable:
 - staff to work across community, mental health, primary and acute care settings
 - the improvement of preventative healthcare measures.
- Staff to work to full scope of practice.
- Fully embed digital capability.
- Embed the integrated workforce planning framework.
- Develop and implement processes to identify, analyse and share enhanced workforce planning data to support the health system.

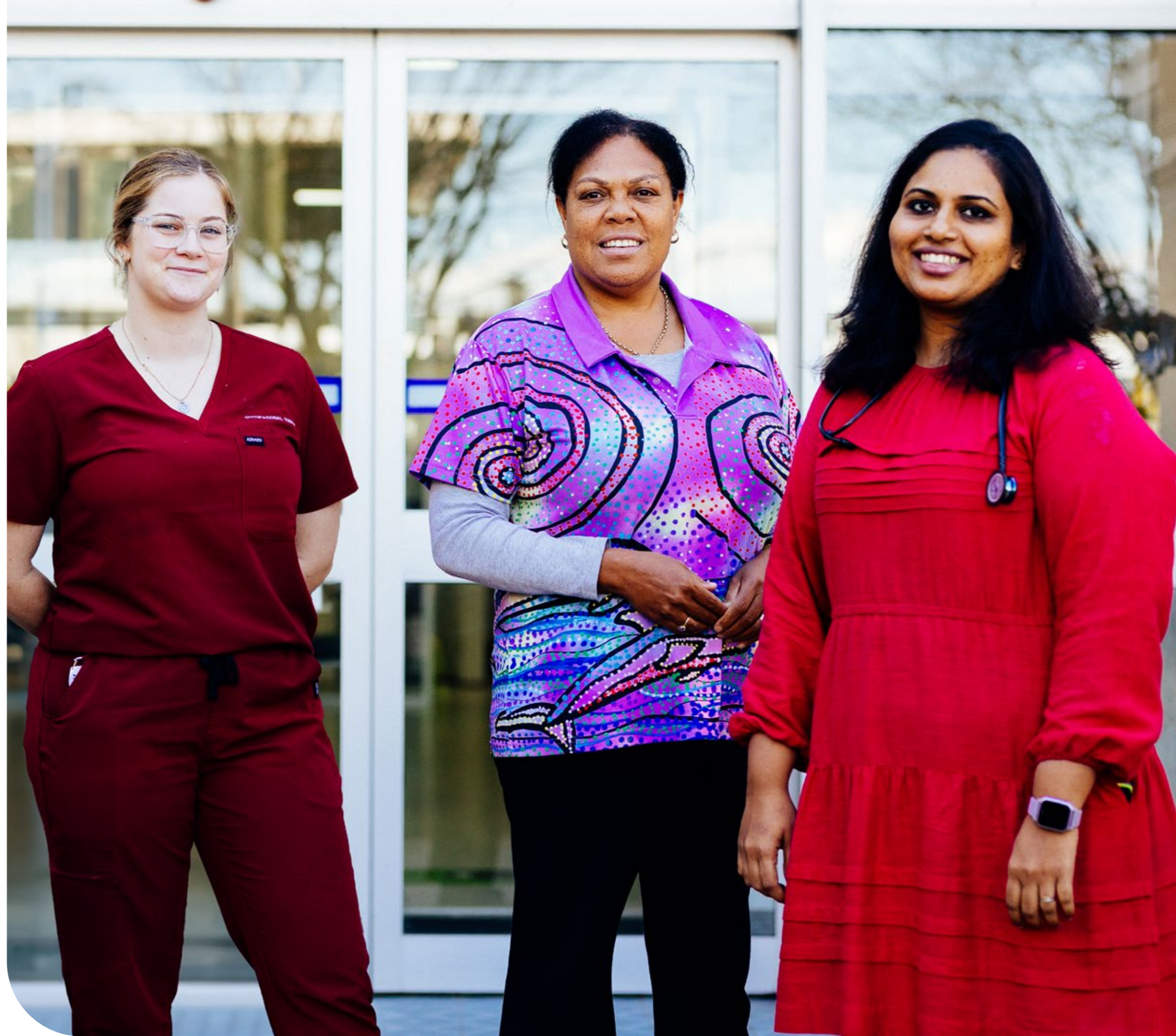
Next steps

Consultation with stakeholders will be undertaken from November 2023 to early 2024. Feedback will shape the focus areas, objectives, strategies and actions that underpin the *Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032*. Feedback will also guide the initiatives and investment priorities to ensure we have a work-ready health workforce in Queensland.

Your input will allow us to create a long-term strategy and make a significant investment in our future workforce.



To find out more about how you can be involved in shaping our workforce strategy, visit www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/strategic-direction/plans/health-workforce-strategy





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