

QG Breakfast Series

6 August 2019 event - transcript

Opening address

Barbara Phillips, Deputy Director-General, Corporate Services Division, Queensland Health

MC: So let's get on with things. So now I'd like to introduce Barb Phillips who will provide the opening address for today. So welcome.

BARBARA: Good morning. It's always lovely see all the wee faces peering out. And I know you're waiting in anticipation for breakfast so I'll keep my opening address fairly brief.

My name is Barbara Phillips, Deputy Director-General, Corporate Services Division, Queensland Health and it's my privilege to be the executive sponsor of the Queensland Health Women's Network.

Firstly, I would like to respectfully acknowledge the traditional owners and custodians of the land on which this event is taking past, Elders past, present and emerging.

Welcome to the second event of the 2019 Queensland Government Breakfast Series and thank you for coming and joining us today. I'm so pleased that we could all be here together. I think we've got an amazing line-up of speakers today and I think it's going to be a lively discussion. And I think it's particularly pertinent to some of the challenges and opportunities that we're facing as a system.

This event is hosted by Queensland Health Women's Network which was established to inform and support progress towards a more inclusive workplace and to provide pathways for inspiration, change and equality.

We're here this morning to learn about the impact changing technology has on our workplaces and our people, and ways we can better prepare both employers and employees to navigate the changing environment and how we can adapt and change usefully.

The invention and introduction of new technology constantly shapes and changes the way we work and can have immense effects on the workforce, both positive and negative. As these new technologies disrupt workplaces, it's essential we understand the impacts of new technologies and how we can as organisations can position ourselves to effectively support people as our biggest assets.

When we think about technology and how it has or is changing our workplaces, we naturally think of the innovations that are affecting how we work today, cloud computing, mobile technology, and artificial intelligence. While these advancements are undoubtedly having a profound effect on the way we work and will shape the jobs of the future, this is not a new phenomenon. In reality advancements in technology have affected the way the way we work

over hundreds of years. What we may now consider as very simple innovations have had huge impacts on how we work and live our lives.

For instance the invention of the light bulb in the late 1800's meant people were no longer reliant on daylight to complete their work and forever changed hours of business. The invention of the telephone moved our workplaces away from a reliance on written communication and into an era of verbal interaction allowing us to work faster and more efficiently.

Jumping forward 100 years or so and the invention of the internet in the 1960's has led to some of the most significant changes to the way we work. Time and space barriers to communication have been eliminated through the use of email, instant messaging and video conferencing, meaning people can work remotely and more flexibly than ever.

Throughout my own career I've seen the introduction of desktop computers which made typewriters redundant for those of us, I'm sure there are some of us who can remember typewriters, surely. I can't be the only one. Yes, I can see a few hands. It's all right, there's no shaming going on here. And then we moved from desktops to laptops and tablet devices.

I think the biggest change I've seen has certainly been the invention of the smart phone and how that's affected us all. And I'm the first to say smart phones have both been beneficial and detrimental to the way I work. While I can access important information and documents anywhere and at any time it has also created an expectation that I place upon myself that I'm available 24/7. Which makes it difficult to switch off. Something we all need to do from time to time.

With all these changes naturally comes some hesitation or fear about the unknown, about what these changes will mean for the way we do our jobs and our job security. As employers take advantage of new technologies to improve productivity and outcomes, there is an ethical responsibility to bring our employees on the journey with us. Part of looking to the future is planning to ensure our workforce is sufficiently supported, trained and prepared for what's to come. Our people are our biggest assets and we should remember to treat them as such.

To help understand the impacts of technology and the advancements on our workplaces and workforces, Jobs Queensland has been established as the Queensland Government as a Statutory entity to provide independent strategic advice on future skills requirements, workforce planning and development issues and apprenticeships and traineeships.

Shortly we will hear from Brett Hall, Acting Executive Director of Jobs Queensland this morning who will speak to us about their discussion paper The Future of Work 2030 - Evolution or Revolution. I do encourage those who haven't seen that publication to take some time to have a look. It's a good read, and there's some really interesting thought-provoking challenges for us I think as a system to think forward.

All our speakers this morning bring a unique perspective to this discussion and I look forward to learning with you all about the challenges and opportunities ahead. I hope you enjoy the breakfast and I look forward to the discussion. Thank you.