Message from the Chief Executive

Above: Michel Lok, Health Service Chief Executive

This newsletter edition is another great illustration of some of the excellent work that is being done across our health service.

From welcoming our new senior dental officers on Weipa and Thursday Island, to the valuable emergency training being run for our health workers. We profile Napranum health worker Patrick Wasiu who has become a strong voice for Indigenous communities in the battle against rheumatic heart disease. There is also an important story about helping patients when they travel out of our region.

On another note, I am pleased transition planning in Aurukun is continuing. A local leadership team has been established and Measures of Success have been developed by which both health organisations can be held to account by community for health improvements.

Refurbishment and extensions to the Aurukun Primary Health Care Centre are set to start in August 2017 and a plan has been developed to colocate acute and emergency services into Apunipima’s primary health building and move other services into the community.

I want to thank all our local staff for getting involved and building a team with Apunipima staff.

Regards

Michel

Michel Lok

Nursing & Midwifery Directors meet

Above: Andrea Mann (A/DoNM TI Hospital), Annemarie Scully (A/DoNM Kowanyama) and Jane Davies (ND Operational Services).

Main photo above from left: Cath Fisher (DoN Aurukun), Lucy Pullen (DoNM Bamaga), Vikki Jackson (DoNM Cooktown) Lyn Mitchell (ND OI and PHCCs North) Melanie Durden (DONM Pompuraaw), Mark Goodman (A/DoNM Southern PHCCs), Lesley Reid (DoNM Hope Vale), Tracey Seekac (A/DoNM Weipa), Josh Stafford (DoNM Southern PHCCs), Carl Christiansen (Acting DoNM Hope Vale) and Vince Connellan (DoNM Wujal Wujal).

Torres and Cape HHS Directors of Nursing and Midwifery met in Cairns for a five-day forum in May. The forum included detailed work on the strategic plan; a network meeting with JCU; and presentations and training sessions from divisions across the Torres and Cape HHS including finance; human resources; quality, safety and risk; transition to community control; contracts; telehealth; and, planning and performance.

Diabetes trial on TI

Our diabetes team on Thursday Island has expanded thanks to a trial involving more clinics, more staff and home visits.

Left: Edna Sambo, Liz Wheatley, Shirley Kusu, June Bann, Macissa Fienat, Dr Tony Brown, Corina Billingham and Rialt Peterie. Not pictured: Dr Ruth Stewart, Maryann Cook. Picture courtesy of Aaron Smith, Torres News.
The May Board meeting was held in Cairns on Thursday 25 May 2017. The following matters were among those discussed:

- The Board Chair congratulated Member Price and Member Davis on their reappointment to the TCHHS Board for a term of three years as documented in the Queensland Government Gazette number 11, 12 May 2017. Member Price and Member Davis have been appointed from 18 May 2017 to 17 May 2020.
- The Board selected and endorsed Member Edwards to join the membership of the Tropical Australia Academic Health Centre Governance Group.
- The Board selected and endorsed Member Davis as the corporate representative of TCHHS to attend North Queensland Primary Healthcare Network Member meetings.
- The Board Chair provided an overview of ongoing and regular discussions with Cape York Communities and Council in relation to Transition to Community Control.
- The Board will be scheduling a meeting with a National Disability Insurance Scheme representative in the coming months in preparation for the roll out of the program in 2018.
- The Board noted the successful progress of the Building Maintenance Remediation Program and congratulated staff on meeting the agreed milestones.

The next Board meeting will be held in Weipa on Thursday 22 June 2017.

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 Ted (Fraser) Nai, Dr Scott Davis, Mr Horace Baira, Mr Greg Edwards and Mr Brian Woods.

Workshop builds mozzie management capacity

Above: Eddie Bobongie (Environmental Health Coordinator) with Mosquito Workshop participants from around Cape York. Photo courtesy of Cape York News.

Torres and Cape HHS District Environmental Health (EH) Coordinator Eddie Bobongie coordinated a three-day mosquito management workshop for council and government workers in Weipa in May.

“We trained participants to implement and maintain their own local programs to respond to disease risks and nuisance risks posed by mosquitoes,” said Eddie.

“We emphasised the importance of building partnerships in mosquito management and enhancing local capacity for monitoring, surveillance and response actions,” said Eddie.

Some of the resources and equipment for the workshop was sponsored by the Dengue Action Response Team (DART) and ZIKA programs.

Features of the workshop included mosquito sampling, trapping, identification, record keeping, equipment and chemical usage and maintenance, education and localised program development.

More than 30 representatives attended the workshop which included theory and hands-on practical sessions.

Attendees consisted of Queensland Health EH and DART staff, Department of Agriculture and Water Resources, EH Workers and Rangers from Northern Peninsula Area Regional Council, Napranum, Mapoon, Lockhart River, Aurukun and Mapoon Aboriginal Shire Councils, Local Law Officers from Weipa Town Authority and representatives from the Northern Australian Indigenous Land and Sea Management Alliance.

For more information contact Eddie Bobongie on 0437 132 233.
Patrick’s passion as an advocate for Rheumatic Heart Disease patients

As an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker based in Napranum, Patrick Wasiu's love of working in health and helping people started after his own serious battle with rheumatic heart disease (RHD); a disease that damaged his heart so badly it required him to travel to Townsville and have heart valve replacement surgery.

Patrick said his heart valve surgery was difficult. “It was hard on my family, especially mum and dad. We had to move away from the community. Mum had to make the hard decision to leave dad behind. Schooling was very hard, little English, language barriers, loss of weeks and months of schooling and education. We had to try and change from a little community to the ‘Big Smoke’ and budgeting was very tight and difficult as I had to go to the hospital all the time and the taxi fares weren’t cheap at all.

“My experience also made me understand how important it is that clinicians are sensitive to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. For Indigenous patients their physical health is closely tied with their emotional and spiritual health. That’s why specialists should always work with Indigenous liaison officers and health workers who have a better understanding of the patient and their situation,” said Patrick.

As a result of his interest in RHD, Patrick has been invited to be on the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Rheumatic Heart Disease (RHD) Action Steering Committee. Patrick is the only health worker on the committee which will meet regularly in Brisbane to develop an action plan to help Indigenous patients in community, and help families and community to support people with RHD. Patrick will be a strong advocate for cultural awareness training and the importance of health workers in working with patients.

“I do a lot of health promotion around RHD and helping people. I strongly recommend that if you ever have any joint pains, shortness of breath, or any sickness that you don’t think is normal, go and see the doctor, it’s really important. Don’t leave it until it’s too late.”

Health Service Chief Executive Michel Lok congratulated Patrick for his commitment to the RHD cause. “Queensland Health is lucky to have Patrick on their RHD steering committee as his passion and personal experience of RHD is invaluable in helping clinicians and policy makers understand RHD from the point of view of both the health worker and the patient.”

Photo and story elements courtesy of RHD Australia.
Marsat shares stories about wellbeing services

Above: Marsat describing the logo for SEWB-ATODS and how the program delivers services in accordance with the Torres Model of Primary Health Care.

Marsat Ketchell, Program Manager for Social and Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drugs (ATODS), in the northern sector of Torres and Cape HHS, was recently invited to attend a *Shared Stories* workshop in Cairns facilitated by Just North and Youth Empowerment Towards Independence (YETI).

*Shared Stories* was a highly successful workshop for people who work with vulnerable and at risk young people.

The catchphrase for the workshop was ‘learning from each other about youth alcohol and drug work in Far North Queensland’. The workshop provided a forum where ideas could be discussed in an easy to understand way for the novice worker and even the seasoned workers found that there were learnings with time for all to connect.

Marsat explained to the workshop some of the challenges of caring for people across the Torres Strait Islands. “People were blown away that the cost to fly from Murray Island to Thursday Island return is the same as travelling from TI to Brisbane/Sydney,” said Marsat.

*Shared Stories* was attended by 85 workers from Cairns, Yarrabah, Atherton, Innisfail, Tully, Torres Strait, Northern Peninsula Area, Western Cape, Hope Vale, Cooktown, Wujal Wujal, Aurukun, Kowanyama and Pormpuraaw.

For more information please contact tonya@yeti.net.au

Reconciliation Week

Back Row: Amanda Wegrzyniak, Thressa Ward, Gareth Salkield, Helen Hanush, Lorrie Polacik, Jacki Calam and Samantha Gray.

Front Row: Katrina Seng, James Tapau, Fiona Gillett, Corinne Hoebert, James Bennett and Fiona Williams.

Staff from different services including Cooktown MPHS (above) acknowledged and celebrated Reconciliation Week.

Katrina Seng, Nurse Unit Manager Maternal and Ambulatory Care at Cooktown MPHS, made a beetroot and chocolate cake for morning tea, which was enjoyed by all.

More ENT surgery for Cape York

Above: Denise Newman (far left) with patients and their supporters, Dr Pham and CheckUp’s Nelson Lee.

Torres and Cape HHS Ear Nose and Throat (ENT) Coordinator, Denise Newman, has been working with CheckUp to provide more specialist surgery in Cape York.

Canberra-based ENT specialist Dr Pham flew to Cape York in May to assess hearing health for 108 people in Cooktown and Weipa. He also performed an ENT telehealth consult for the first time to Kowanyama and Lockhart River. It was a great experience for the patients and families.
Promoting health careers in Weipa

Staff from Weipa Integrated Health Services attended the Western Cape College Careers Expo in May to chat and encourage students into a career in health.

Staff gave individual talks to small groups of students and provided an overview of their career and career pathway, training and education and what they love about their job and working for Queensland Health. A great variety of careers were represented from Health Workers, Dietitian, Nursing, Medical and Dental.

In the afternoon staff provided demonstrations on bandaging, blood sugar testing, a quiz to win an iTunes card and teeth cleaning; and there were plenty of giveaways and fresh fruit for the students.

The team was joined by James Cook University representative Alice Cairns who provided information to students on university pathways.

PCCM proves popular around Australia

The Primary Clinical Care Manual (PCCM) is gaining a strong national profile.

The PCCM is now used across rural and remote Queensland, the larger rural and remote Health Districts in NSW, all of Victoria, Tasmania, the remote centres in South Australia and most recently by Western Australia Country Health Services.

The Australian Defence Force uses the PCCM as one of their primary clinical guidelines and a number of universities use it for teaching and as a reference text.

A number of Aboriginal Medical Services are also using the manual and Wuchopperen recently endorsed the manual for use across their services with the aim to encourage best-practice standardised care.
Rio shift workers get healthy eating advice

Weipa Dietitian Tegan Fahey has been presenting healthy eating sessions to the Rio Tinto shift workers of Weipa since the beginning of February.

The sessions covered a range of healthy eating information with an enhanced focus on nutrition-related fatigue management. Shift workers also received a copy of the *Fuelling Against Fatigue Cookbook* that has been developed specifically for the Rio Tinto shift workers of Weipa.

Rio Tinto’s Fatigue Management Working Group realised the association between poorer dietary choices and the frequency of fatigue related incidences. After surveying shift workers, it was established there was a strong desire for more information about healthy eating, simple recipes and information which explains how nutrition may help to manage fatigue.

Last year, the Fatigue Management Working Group collaborated with a Torres and Cape HHS Dietitian and two fourth year Nutrition and Dietetic students from Griffith University to develop the cookbook. Earlier this year, the publication was ready for distribution to all shift workers.

With the support of Rio Tinto Health and Safety Advisor Donna Quay, Tegan has presented over 20 one-hour session over the past four months to ensure all shift workers receive the valuable information and a copy of the cookbook to take home.

If you would like more information regarding the cookbook or education sessions, please feel free to contact Tegan Fahey on teagan.fahey@health.qld.gov.au.

Remote health shines at conference

Staff from the Torres and Cape HHS and the Rural and Remote Clinical Support Unit (RRCSU) attended the 14th National Rural Health Conference (NRHC) in Cairns recently.

RRCSU also attended 14th WONCA World Rural Health Conference the following week which was an international event that saw delegates from around the world exchange information on the latest developments and challenges in rural and remote health.

The NRHC is the pre-eminent conference for those interested in the health and wellbeing of the more than 6.7 million people in rural and remote Australia.

The RRCSU showcased the unit’s services and products and also marketed medical officer opportunities on behalf of Queensland Health’s rural and remote Hospital and Health Services.

“Over 100 individual discussions took place with over 30 contacts expressing a strong desire to work within or find out more information on the four rural and remote HHSs,” said Executive Director of RRCSU Peter McCormack.
The Regional eHealth Project (ReHP) recently visited Weipa, Napranum and Mapoon to look at technical and training requirements.

During the visits, staff at the facilities completed surveys about how they are feeling about the new electronic health record system and what training and communication methods they would prefer.

ReHP Senior Change Officer Caitlin Williams said the site visits were crucial in helping Torres and Cape HHS staff to further understand the project and what it involved.

“These visits give us a chance to talk further with staff and find out how they are feeling about the project,” she said.

“This means we can plan our communication and training so that it is as effective and engaging as possible.”

Other sites throughout the Torres and Cape HHS will also be surveyed in the coming weeks.

In addition to the survey work, technical specialists from the ReHP team completed an initial analysis of the existing technology and infrastructure. They performed some tests with the new system to see how it will work in these remote environments. There were some positive initial results, with the system being responsive even where there is limited network capacity.

For more information on the ReHP, visit their QHEPS site or email regionalehealthproject@health.qld.gov.au

### Patient travel pack

The Torres and Cape HHS travel team has developed a Patient Travel Pack to help patients navigate their travel to and from Cairns.

The travel packs are to be used within community and Patient Travel Scheme (PTS) officers are encouraged to provide a pack to each patient travelling. The packs include:

- Travel itinerary and check-in times
- Doctor Certification Letter and Certification Form
- Maps of hospital and Cairns
- Cairns Hospital Indigenous Liaison Officers contact details

Marty Smyth (Travel Team Leader) and Rotana DeBusch (Travel Officer) travelled to Kowanyama and Pormpuraaw in May and met with PTS Officers to start the trial the travel packs. So far the feedback has been positive.

“We have incorporated a few changes after receiving feedback from Pormpuraaw and Kowanyama and the travel packs will be distributed to facilities by the end of June,” said Sue Cooper, Manager of the Travel Office.
Welcome to our two new Dental Officers: Dr Matthew Moore is our Senior Dental Officer in Weipa and Dr Jean Pierre De Villiers (JP) is our Principal Dental Officer at Thursday Island.

Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service Director of Oral Health Dr Yvonne Mangan said Dr Matthew Moore is no stranger to Weipa. “A few years ago, when he was completing his dental studies, he undertook some of his final year placements at Weipa and has been keen to return ever since.

“We’re very glad to have Dr Moore on board and welcome him to the Torres and Cape HHS oral health team.”

Dr Moore said he had made the decision after his student placement that he would like to return to the Cape later in his career and was happy to have achieved that goal now.

“I enjoyed Weipa, the lifestyle and the people and am very happy to be back in a professional capacity,” he said.

Dr Mangan said Dr Moore replaced former public dentist Dr Shane Hearps, who had left the health service nearly 12 months ago.

On Thursday Island Dr Mangan said Dr Jean Pierre De Villiers recently took up his new position at the Thursday Island dental clinic.

“We’re very glad to have Dr De Villiers on board and welcome him to the Torres and Cape HHS oral health team,” she said.

Dr De Villiers replaces Dr Sumit Sachdeva who left the health service in October last year.

Dr Mangan said experienced locum dentists had been filling in since Dr Sachdeva’s departure. “Thanks to the locums, and our other two permanent dentists, there has been no impact on the continued delivery of oral health services in the region,” she said.

She said Dr De Villiers was a highly experienced dentist who had been working with the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service for the past seven years.

“He is looking forward to leading the oral health team throughout the Torres Strait and NPA region,” she said.

“His wife, Marica Bronkhorst, has also joined the oral health team on Thursday Island as a dental assistant.

“Meanwhile, Dr De Villiers has hit the ground running in the Torres Strait and is currently delivering oral health services on the islands through the use of our new portable dental equipment.

“So far this year, we have already visited Warraber, Poruma (Coconut) and Erub (Darnley) islands, as well as Mer Island,” she said.

The dental team will visit Masig (Yorke) and Lama (Yam) islands in June, followed by the St Paul’s and Kubin communities on Moa Island in August.
Health Workers train in emergency care

Ten health workers from around the southern sector completed the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Professional Remote Emergency Care training recently.

The three-day training course was coordinated by Josslyn Tully (Manager Health Worker Services) with funding from the NQ Primary HealthCare Network.

The training recognised that Health Workers have a unique role in their communities including the need to navigate the roles they play in families and in communities whilst providing health care.

Above: Karen Koko (Lockhart River) and David Kepper (Pormpuraaw) with trainer (centre).

Above: Christine Port (Hope Vale), Josslyn Tully and George Morseau (Thursday Island).

Above: Graeme Port (Hope Vale), Sylvia Kris (Napranum), Jill Lawrence (Napranum), Anna Cleary (Wujal Wujal) and the CRANA trainer.

Above: Sharon Booth (Old Mapoon and George Morseau (Thursday Island).

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

The Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service respectfully acknowledges the Traditional and Historical Owners, past and present, within the lands in which we work.