The Townsville Hospital and Health Service employs 6,063 clinical and non-clinical people to deliver quality and safe care for individuals, families and communities across its catchment.

This is the region’s largest workforce. The nursing stream has the highest portion of females at 88.6 per cent while 2.9 per cent of staff identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, 12.9 per cent as coming from a non-English speaking background and 2.64 per cent as having a disability. The healthcare workforce is aging nationally and within HHS 7.4 per cent (451) are aged under 25, 46.4 per cent (2,815 staff) are aged 25-44 years and 46.1 per cent (2,797) are aged 45 and over. 220 new graduates were employed in 2016-2017. Across 2016-2017 the Townsville HHS experienced a 7.9 per cent separation rate from those holding permanent roles.
**Workforce Profile**

Minimum Obligatory Human Resource Information (MOHRI) is a whole-of-government methodology for reporting and monitoring the workforce.

*FTE = full-time equivalent*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MOHRI Occupied FTE</th>
<th>MOHRI Occupied Headcount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>5,120</td>
<td>6,063</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managerial and Clerical</td>
<td>794</td>
<td>885</td>
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<tr>
<td>Medical incl VMOs</td>
<td>648</td>
<td>731</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
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<td>2,783</td>
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<tr>
<td>Operational</td>
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<td>915</td>
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<tr>
<td>Trade and Artisans</td>
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<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professional and Technical</td>
<td>624</td>
<td>706</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Workforce Engagement**

In response to the 2015 Working for Queensland Employee Opinion Survey a working party was established by the HSCE to promote culture and leadership initiatives across the Townsville HHS. This group has been instrumental in developing key focus areas to include innovation, core values, engagement and reward and recognition.

**Reward and Recognition**

Townsville HHS staff celebrated more than 11,775 collective years of service at length-of-service presentations at local facilities. Six individuals and teams were acknowledged in 2016-2017 for embodying the HHS’s Vision, Purpose and Values at the annual peer-nominated Staff Excellence Awards.

The Staff Excellence Awards also saw two eminent, retired Townsville specialists, Associate Professor Vic Callanan and Dr Sid Roveda, respectively honoured for their contributions to anaesthesiology and pain medicine, and maxillofacial surgery, as consultants emeritus in the HHS.

The award winners were:

**Vision**

Dr John Masson  
(gastroenterologist)

**Purpose**

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Leadership Advisory Council

**Integrity**

Elizabeth Baker  
(clinical nurse ophthalmology bookings)

**Compassion**

Katrina Pearce  
(medical outpatients’ team leader)

**Accountability**

Planned Procedure Unit Team

**Respect**

Joanne Sherring  
(person-centred care lead)

**Engagement**

Patricia Husband  
(prostate cancer specialist nurse)
Staff commitment to Indigenous health outcomes was also celebrated during annual NAIDOC Week festivities.

*In 2016, the NAIDOC awardees were:*

**TEAM OF THE YEAR**  
ATODS Diversion and Recovery Team

**FUTURE LEADER**  
Tara Douglas  
(advanced health worker)

**NON-INDIGENOUS STAFF CONTRIBUTION AWARD**  
Wendy Clein  
(registered nurse)

**QUEENSLAND MULTICULTURAL AWARDS 2016**

In August 2016, the Townsville HHS was presented with the Business Excellence Award for its implementation of a pilot project, partnering with TAFE Queensland, to offer non-clinical work placements for job seekers in the federally funded Skills for Education and Employment program. This program enabled 18 culturally and linguistically diverse job seekers to gain their first taste of working in Australia.

The Townsville HHS was the only health service in the state to participate in this initiative which successfully supports migrant and refugee job seekers with no prior Australian work experience.

**STAFF TRAINING**

The Townsville HHS commenced the move towards an increased online approach to education and training through the implementation of a new learning management system. Learning On-Line delivers mandatory and other professional development training from a single platform available to all staff 24/7 from any internet-connected computer offering increased efficiency, consistency and availability. At 30 June 2017, 91.6 per cent of staff had completed mandatory training.

**WORKFORCE PLANNING**

The HHS has a comprehensive workforce strategy to attract and retain a highly skilled professional workforce. The Townsville HHS Strategic Workforce Plan 2014-2018 (2016 Update) and emphasises workforce sustainability, capability and culture.

**BULLYING AND HARASSMENT**

During 2016-2017, the Townsville HHS HSCE launched a zero-tolerance bullying and harassment initiative. This included mandatory on-line training modules for both managers and staff. The anti-bullying initiative is aimed at creating a respectful workplace, free from bullying and harassment. The initiative seeks to create an awareness and understanding of what constitutes bullying, how it can be prevented and how organisational values play a vital role in building a mutually respectful workplace.

**INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS**

The HHS engaged constructively in 2016-2017 with industrial unions representing a diverse professional workforce. A consultation and escalation process provided the opportunity to share concerns and build a constructive workplace.
Nurse graduates Tayla Smith, The Townsville Hospital, Amelia Mitchell, Ayr Health Service, and Chanelle Van Der Mescht, Charters Towers Health Service

Hughenden clinical nurse Karen Struthers works part-time

**EARLY RETIREMENT, REDUNDANCY AND RETRENCHMENT**

No packages were paid during the period.

**PUBLIC SECTOR ETHICS ACT 1994**

The Townsville HHS is committed to ensuring the highest level of ethical behaviour through all areas of the health service. The organisation upholds the values and standards of conduct outlined in the Code of Conduct for the Queensland Public Service, which was developed under the Public Sector Ethics Act 1994 consisting of four core principles:

- integrity and impartiality
- promoting the public good
- commitment to the system of government
- accountability and transparency

Each principle is strengthened by a set of values together with standards of conduct describing the behaviours that demonstrate each principle. Staff are required to complete mandatory ethics, integrity and accountability online training annually to support an understanding of their obligations under the Public Sector Ethics Act 1994.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY AND WELLNESS**

The wellbeing of people is the focus of the Townsville HHS. The service is committed to protecting the people who work in its hospitals and healthcare facilities, and those who access the HHS’s services and visit its sites. The Townsville HHS has continued to build on its HealthWorks employee health program. A key initiative of this program was the introduction of the fitness passport, which has grown to more than 1,150 individual members.

As part of promoting work-life balance, the HHS offers flexible working arrangements. Townsville HHS employs 39.5 per cent of its staff part time; the highest group of part-time workers is nurses with 57.8 per cent of the nursing workforce employed part-time.

**WORKERS’ REHABILITATION**

The Townsville HHS recognises the health benefits of working, and is committed to ensuring employees receive the support they need to safely return to work and where possible participate in a staged early return-to-work program following illness or injury. The Townsville HHS WorkCover premium rate was 0.72 in 2016-2017, remaining below the industry standard. The hours lost per FTE were 0.3 per cent.

**OCCUPATIONAL VIOLENCE PREVENTION**

The Townsville HHS supports a zero tolerance for violence against staff. In 2016-2017 the Townsville HHS implemented the Violence Aggression Mitigation and Prevention Risk Assessment process to identify appropriate risk-mitigation strategies for existing or potential occupational violence hazards. The roll out of ‘Code Grey’ and the body-worn cameras trial were major measures toward countering aggressive behaviour.
Improving the patient journey for people with breast cancer and bolstering treatment compliance for patients with sleep apnoea are among the projects set to benefit from a new funding bucket in the Townsville HHS.

The Innovation Fund was the brainchild of the Leadership and Culture Working Party, providing one-off funding of up to $20,000 to clinical and non-clinical staff or teams to enable them to develop clinical, administrative or support system initiatives that lead to improvements in the quality of patient care.

Executive director clinical governance Dr Tracey Bessel said the standard of the applications was high. “What this has shown is that there is a great groundswell of innovative ideas coming from across our many and varied areas that this funding will support in becoming a reality,” she said.

“Innovation is essential in healthcare and supporting our staff to push the boundaries and look at new ways of doing business is in the best interests of our staff and our community.”

Medical oncology senior staff specialist Dr Abhishek Joshi was a successful applicant who has secured $15,000 for a project aimed at better coordinating care for patients with breast cancer by developing an integrated care pathway.

“Patients with breast cancer have to navigate some pretty complex health systems across private providers, primary care and the hospital,” he said.

“This year we’ve established a Townsville Breast Cancer Network, which brings together clinicians from all those streams, but we really needed funding to address some of the current gaps in the patient journey. “By closing these gaps we’ll be in a position to make the patient journey from diagnosis through treatment to a cure more satisfying as well as delivering some efficiency for the health system.”

Dr Joshi said roughly a third of the money would be used for information sessions for general practitioners, a third to gather feedback from breast cancer patients – particularly those from regional areas – and the final third to develop digital platforms to assist patients.

“Having a good idea is one thing but to make that idea a reality you need funding and that is where this grant will really help us,” he said.

Nurse unit manager medical and cardiac clinics Stephen Reeves received $5400 for an auto-titration positive airway pressure trial for patients with obstructive sleep apnoea.

The trial allows patients to receive the second component of their treatment at home rather than coming into hospital.

“So what we are hoping to do with this funding is purchase equipment that will allow us to monitor both the required treatment pressure and oxygen saturations during the night,” Mr Reeves said.

“A big part in this working successfully is making sure that patients are using the equipment properly and therefore the results we are getting are accurate.”

Mr Reeves said the funding would be used to purchase upgraded equipment as well as provide education to ensure patients were using it successfully.
HHS staff contribute to their communities

Prostate cancer nurse Trish Husband climbed Mt Kilimanjaro to raise funds for the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia

Townsville HHS staff are not just renowned for their exemplary care of patients in hospital, they also dedicate hundreds of hours of their own time to important health and social causes and fundraising endeavours to support people in need.

In 2016-2017, staff climbed mountains, cycled hundreds of kilometres, championed the education of girls in Africa and handed out Christmas presents to those alone in hospital during the festive season.

Prostate cancer nurse Trish Husband endured a gruelling six-day, 72km climb to the top of Africa’s highest peak, Mt Kilimanjaro, to raise funds for the Prostate Cancer Foundation of Australia.

“Climbing Mt Kilimanjaro was one of the biggest challenges of my life but it’s nothing compared to the challenges that men with prostate cancer face each day,” she said.

Principal house officer Dr Stephanie Moore took part in the annual ‘Do it in a Dress’ campaign, donning a school uniform for one of her intensive care unit (ICU) shifts to help raise money to send girls in Africa to school.

“Around 60 million girls globally are denied an education, simply because they are girls,” Dr Moore said.

“I was hugely supported by my colleagues in ICU and in other areas of the hospital with many generous donations.”

Each July, Townsville HHS staff take part in the Townsville to Cairns Bike Ride to raise money for the Children’s Cancer Institute.

In 2016-2017, radiation therapists Bronwyn Shirley and Michaela Thomas were among a number of staff that completed the 360km ride.

Mrs Thomas said the cause was particularly meaningful for radiation therapists who worked with patients with cancer every day.

“It was a challenge but one which we were very happy to take on to raise money for children with a cancer diagnosis,” she said.

For administration team leader Katrina Pearce seeing patients alone in hospital on Christmas Day was a predicament crying out for a solution.

“There are a number of charity drives that cater for children at Christmas time, but very few for older patients,” she said.

“Our staff at the hospital were so generous donating presents and their time on Christmas morning to hand out the gifts and spend some time with those patients who had no family close by.

“Patients were so touched by the gesture that many of our staff were moved to tears.

“It reminds you what Christmas is all about,” she said.