

Northern Queensland Primary Health Network

Activity Work Plan

Aged Care

2022/23 – 2024/25



NQPHN acknowledges the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Nation Peoples and the Traditional Custodians of this land. We respect their continued connection to land and sea, country, kin, and community. We also pay our respect to their Elders past, present, and emerging as the custodians of knowledge and lore.



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Contents

AC-EI-1 – Commissioning early intervention initiatives to support healthy ageing and ongoing management of chronic conditions	3
AC-VARACF-2 – Support RACFs to increase availability and use of telehealth care for aged care residents	5
AC-AHARACF-3 – Enhanced out of hours support for residential aged care	6
AC-CF-4 – Care finder program	7

Disclaimer

All activities captured in this Activity Work Plan are identified in the Health Needs Assessment conducted by Northern Queensland Primary Health Network and have been approved by the Department of Health and Aged Care.

AC-EI-1 – Commissioning early intervention initiatives to support healthy ageing and ongoing management of chronic conditions

Activity priorities and description

Program key priority area

Aged Care.

Aim of activity


As part of the Australian Government's response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, Northern Queensland Primary Health Network (NQPHN) will undertake and commission dedicated activities to support better health, wellbeing, and access to primary care and aged care services for senior Australians.

The aim of this activity is to support senior Australians to live at home for as long as possible by commissioning early intervention activities, and models of care for chronic disease management that support healthy ageing.

An additional aim of this activity is to also empower general practitioners (GPs) and other primary health care workers through training, tools, and resources which contribute to improved health and care outcomes for older people.

Description of activity

- Leverage off the new chronic disease strategy to support older person's health.
- Support the implementation of activities commissioned in 2022-23, following on from consultations and codesign workshops.
- Partner with organisations that align with the identified needs, but interface with upstream prevention activities or tertiary services.
- Continue identifying training opportunities for primary health care professionals and work collaboratively with internal NQPHN Teams, including the Primary Care Engagement and Workforce Development Teams, to consolidate these opportunities.
- Map existing active healthy ageing groups and available early intervention activities in communities.
- Commission innovative early interventions initiatives to promote healthy ageing and slow the decline or prevent chronic diseases complications.
- Commission student-led allied health outreach for older Australians in rural and remote communities.
- Link early intervention program providers to a network of more than 300 community connectors established from NQPHN's Compassionate Communities project and network of care finders.

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- Deliver information sessions and raise awareness across the sector and communities; increase the uptake and support healthy ageing by raising awareness of the commissioned services and programs with existing senior and carer groups.
 - Regular monitoring and evaluation, contract management of commissioned providers, and reporting.

AC-VARACF-2 – Support RACFs to increase availability and use of telehealth care for aged care residents

Activity priorities and description

Program key priority area

Aged Care.

Aim of activity

As part of the Australian Government's response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, NQPHN will undertake, and commission dedicated activities which support better health, wellbeing, and access to primary care and aged care services for senior Australians.

The intended objectives of these activities are to improve outcomes for senior Australians by:


- commissioning services which address identified needs and gaps in local primary health and aged care systems
- enhancing access to general practitioners (GPs) and other primary health care providers
- supporting access to aged care services and other relevant supports in the community
- building the capacity of health and aged care professionals to deliver high quality care
- improving coordination, integration, and continuity of care.

Description of activity

This activity supports participating Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACFs) in the NQPHN region to have appropriate virtual consultation facilities and technology so their residents can access clinically appropriate telehealth care with primary health care professionals.

NQPHN will:

- assist participating RACFs with appropriate telehealth facilities and equipment to enable their residents to virtually consult with their primary healthcare professionals. These facilities should be compatible with the existing virtual consult technology used by providers in NQPHN's region and will be guided by recognised eHealth standards (e.g. Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine Framework and Guidelines for Telehealth Service).
- provide training to participating RACF staff to support them in developing capabilities that assist their residents in accessing virtual consultation services
- promote the use of enablers of digital health, such as My Health Record
- consult with jurisdictional authorities to ensure the initiative complements, and does not duplicate, efforts underway by state and territory governments to improve technological interoperability between the aged care and health systems
- employ appropriately qualified staff, or upskill existing staff, required to administer this activity.



AC-AHARACF-3 – Enhanced out of hours support for residential aged care

Activity priorities and description

Program key priority area

Aged Care.

Aim of activity

As part of the Australian Government's response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, NQPHN will undertake, and commission dedicated activities which support better health, wellbeing, and access to primary care and aged care services for senior Australians.

The intended objectives of these activities are to improve outcomes for senior Australians by:

- commissioning services which address identified needs and gaps in your local primary health and aged care systems
- enhancing access to general practitioners (GPs) and other primary health care providers
- supporting access to aged care services and other relevant supports in the community
- building the capacity of health and aged care professionals to deliver high quality care
- improving coordination, integration, and continuity of care.

Description of activity

NQPHN will:

- provide guidance to assist participating RACFs in the NQPHN region to develop and implement after-hours action plans which support residents to access the most appropriate medical services out-of-hours
- educate participating RACF staff with out-of-hours health care options and processes for residents
- encourage participating RACFs to implement procedures for keeping residents' digital medical records up to date, particularly following an episode where after hours care is required and support engagement between RACFs and their residents, GPs, and other relevant health professionals, as part of after-hours action plan development.

AC-CF-4 – Care finder program

Activity priorities and description

Program key priority area

Aged Care.

Aim of activity

As part of the Australian Government's response to the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety, NQPHN will undertake, and commission dedicated activities which support better health, wellbeing, and access to primary care and aged care services for senior Australians.

The aim of this activity is to establish and maintain a network of care finders to provide specialist and intensive assistance, to help people within the care finder target population to understand and access aged care and connect with other relevant supports in the community.

Description of activity

The description of the activities NQPHN are planning are targeted to vulnerable older North Queenslanders who find it difficult to navigate the My Aged Care pathway and get registered to receive aged care services and other supports in the community due to living alone, low health literacy, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD)/language barriers, veterans, First Nations Queenslanders/Stolen Generations, care leavers, mistrust in the system, and homelessness, amongst other complexities.

This activity aims to implement the care finder services commissioned in 2023 based on local needs informed by the HNA and supplementary HNA. Commencing from May 2023, these services will:

- provide specialist and intensive assistance to help people within the care finder target population understand how to access aged care and connect with relevant supports in the community
- deliver care based on the model enhancements developed during the care finder codesign workshops that informed human-centric referral pathways and service delivery
- make quality enhancements based on feedback from the CALD population, veterans, care leavers, First Nations, care finders target populations, and relevant stakeholders in the aged care sector, community groups, and carers services
- continue to review the implementation model to ensure the care finder service is meeting the needs of older people, particularly vulnerable older people without support and those eligible for services
- consult with stakeholders for the purpose of identifying improvements to services and integration across aged care, community, and health services
- continually gather care finder clients' feedback regularly for continuous improvement and identify further training needs for care finder frontline staff.

NQPHN will:

- continue to support care finder organisations in their ongoing transition of the Assistance with Care and Housing (ACH) program to the care finder program
- support the establishment of a community of practice for care finder organisations and support their networking with the local aged care system

- establish and maintain a care finder network in northern Queensland to share experiences, peer support, and de-identified case studies for care finders to develop a better understanding of consumer journeys and peer experiences in the field
- establish links, engagement, and networking opportunities for care finders to more than 300 members of the health community connectors network in northern Queensland through the compassionate community's movement as sources of referrals from communities
- continue to provide opportunities for care finders to network with aged care assessment services, aged care service providers, the health and human services sector, and the broader community and social services to ensure continuity of care
- submit reports as outlined in funding schedule milestone to inform program evaluation
- continually monitor and evaluate care finder service delivery demand, outcomes, data collection, and collaboration with care finder organisations to ensure the service is responsive to aged care navigational barriers and improves referral pathways, thus improving customer experiences and understanding of aged care services
- supporting the integration of the care finder network into the local aged care system through the NQPHN integration codesign workshops in Cairns and Townsville
- providing linkages for care finder organisations through our health community connectors across the NQPHN region
- attend the Queensland and Northern Territory (QNT) care finder working group to discuss key learnings with other Primary Health Networks in Queensland, Northern Territory, and Western Australia.

Care finder organisations involved in this activity and its coverage (service locations) are listed below:

- ABIS Community Co-operative Society Ltd (Townsville – ACH Homelessness specific to First Nation Australians)
- Ozcare (Cairns – ACH Homelessness)
- Footprints Community Limited (Mackay, Whitsunday, and Isaac)
- Better Together Community Support (Croydon, Etheridge, Mareeba, and the Tablelands)
- Aged and Disability Advocacy Australia (Aurukun, Kowanyama, Lockhart River, Pormpuraaw, Napranum, Wujal Wujal, Mapoon, Hope Vale, Cook, Weipa, Northern Peninsula Area, Torres Strait Island, Torres, Hinchinbrook, Palm Island, Burdekin, Townsville, Charters Towers, Douglas, Yarrabah, Cassowary Coast, and Cairns)
- Flinders Shire Council (Flinders and Richmond).

NQPHN also conducted two care finder codesign workshops, one in Cairns and the other Townsville, with delegations including CALD, First Nations, and veteran community groups, aged care providers, community centres, local councils, local Hospital and Health Services (HHSs), and advocacy groups to address opportunities that would enhance the integration between the health, aged care, and other systems and support the integration at the local level.

