

Northern Queensland Primary Health Network

# Strategic Plan 2025–28





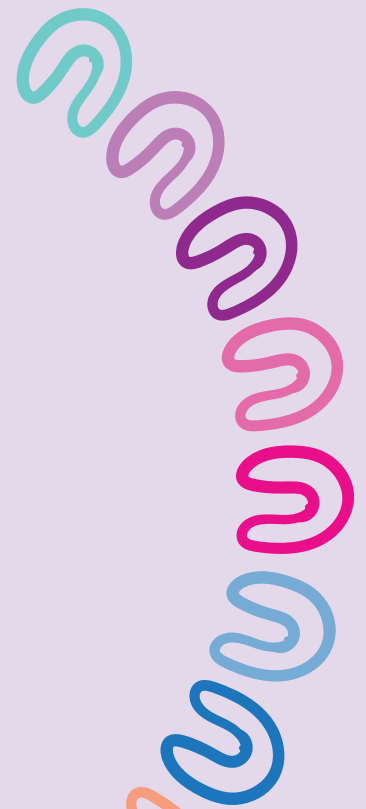
## Acknowledgement

Northern Queensland Primary Health Network (NQPHN) acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as Australia's First Nation Peoples and the Traditional Custodians of this land.

We acknowledge the diverse Traditional Country across our region, including the lands of the Gimuy-Walubara Yidinji, Djabugay, Bindal, Wulgurukaba, and Yuwibara Nations, among many others.

We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging as the custodians of knowledge and lore.

We recognise the continuing living culture of First Nations peoples, the contemporary impacts of colonisation, and the cultural significance of Country in the ongoing journey toward self-determination.



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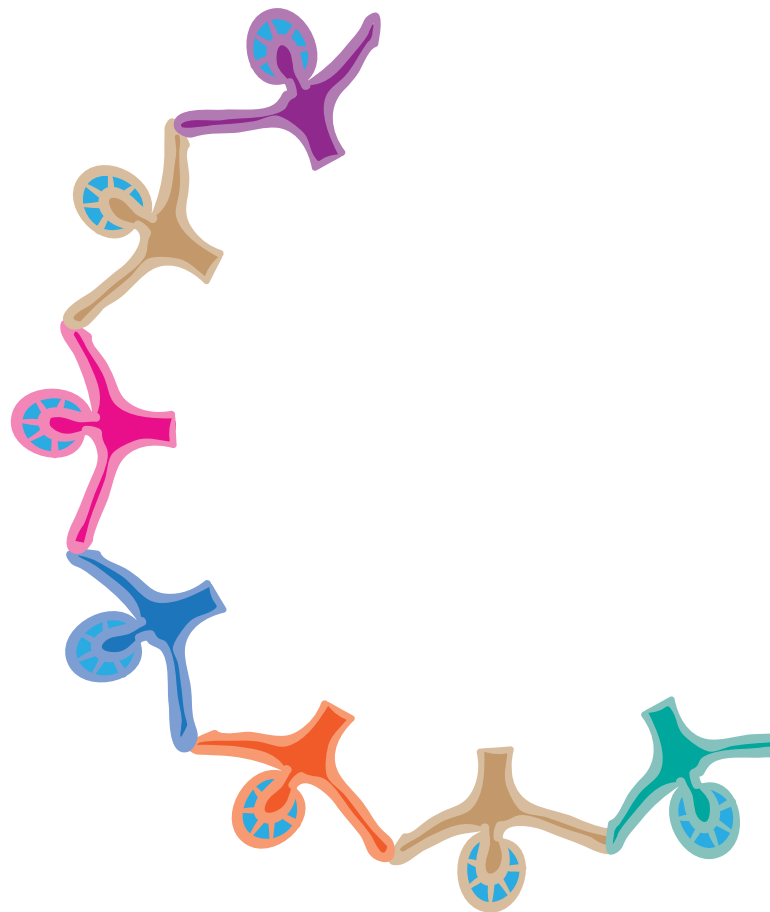
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## Foreword

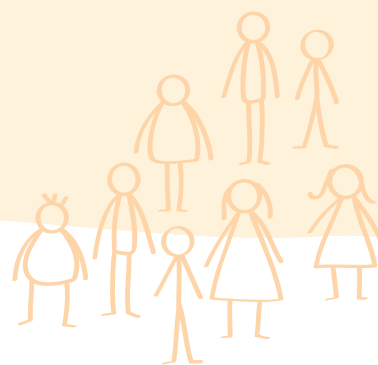
Northern Queensland Primary Health Network's Strategic Plan 2025–28 is a roadmap for achieving better health and wellbeing outcomes across our diverse and vibrant region.

The plan reaffirms our enduring commitment to general practitioners as the cornerstone of primary care, while recognising and valuing the critical role of the broader health workforce - including mental health professionals, allied health professionals, pharmacists, nurses, Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners, peer support workers, and the many others who contribute to the delivery of care. Each plays a vital role in supporting healthier communities.

As we look to the future, this plan reflects our focus on innovation alongside the strengthening of best practice. It also signals our evolving role as a system connector, enabler, and advocate for northern Queenslanders.

We recognise the privilege and responsibility of working across such a geographically and culturally diverse region. Our strategies must be tailored to the unique needs of the people and places across our footprint — from our regional centres to our most remote communities, and especially our Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community members.

Developed within the parameters of the national PHN Program, the plan reflects our responsibility as a steward of public investment and our commitment to working in partnership to deliver meaningful, place-based impact and a healthier future for all northern Queenslanders.



## Our region

Our region covers **four** Hospital and Health Service (HHS) areas:

Torres and Cape  
HHS region

Cairns and Hinterland  
HHS region

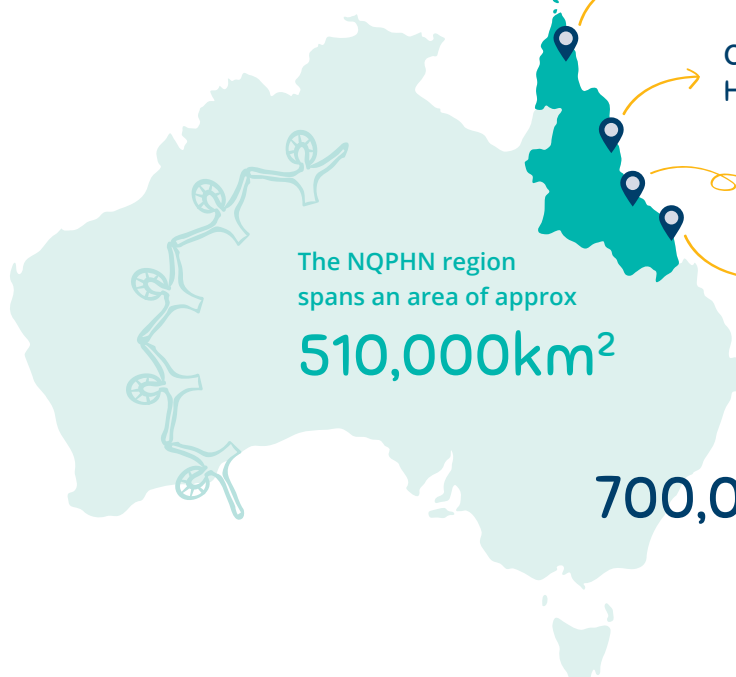
Townsville  
HHS region

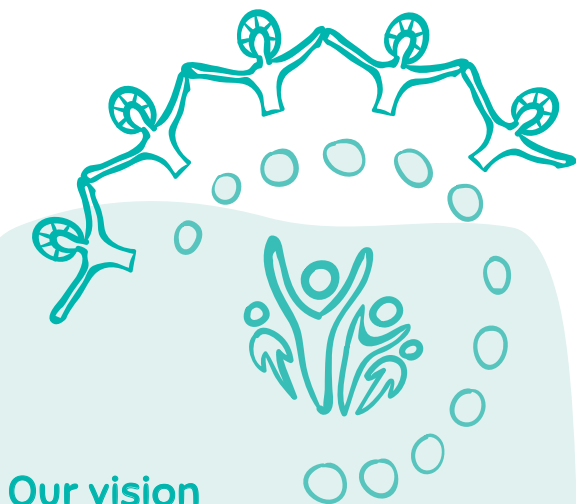
Mackay  
HHS region

The NQPHN region  
spans an area of approx  
**510,000km<sup>2</sup>**

Population of approx

**700,000 people**





## Our vision

A healthy future  
for all northern  
Queenslanders

## Our purpose

We connect, fund, and support primary healthcare so that all northern Queenslanders can access the care and information they need to live healthier lives.

We do this by:



## Our values

### Collaboration

We connect co-operatively across boundaries to share ideas and achieve our goals together.

### Leadership

We are empowered, inspired, and will step up to create a better future.

### Integrity

We hold ourselves to the highest standards of ethics and professionalism.

### Accountability

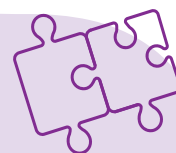
We own our actions, follow through on our promises, and live our values.

### Respect

We hear, acknowledge, and value all people and voices, finding unity in our diversity.


## Our partnerships

We understand that achieving our goals is only possible through strong collaboration with our members, funders, consumers, and our health and community partners. We value our shared ambition and are committed to strengthening and investing in these relationships.



# Our priorities





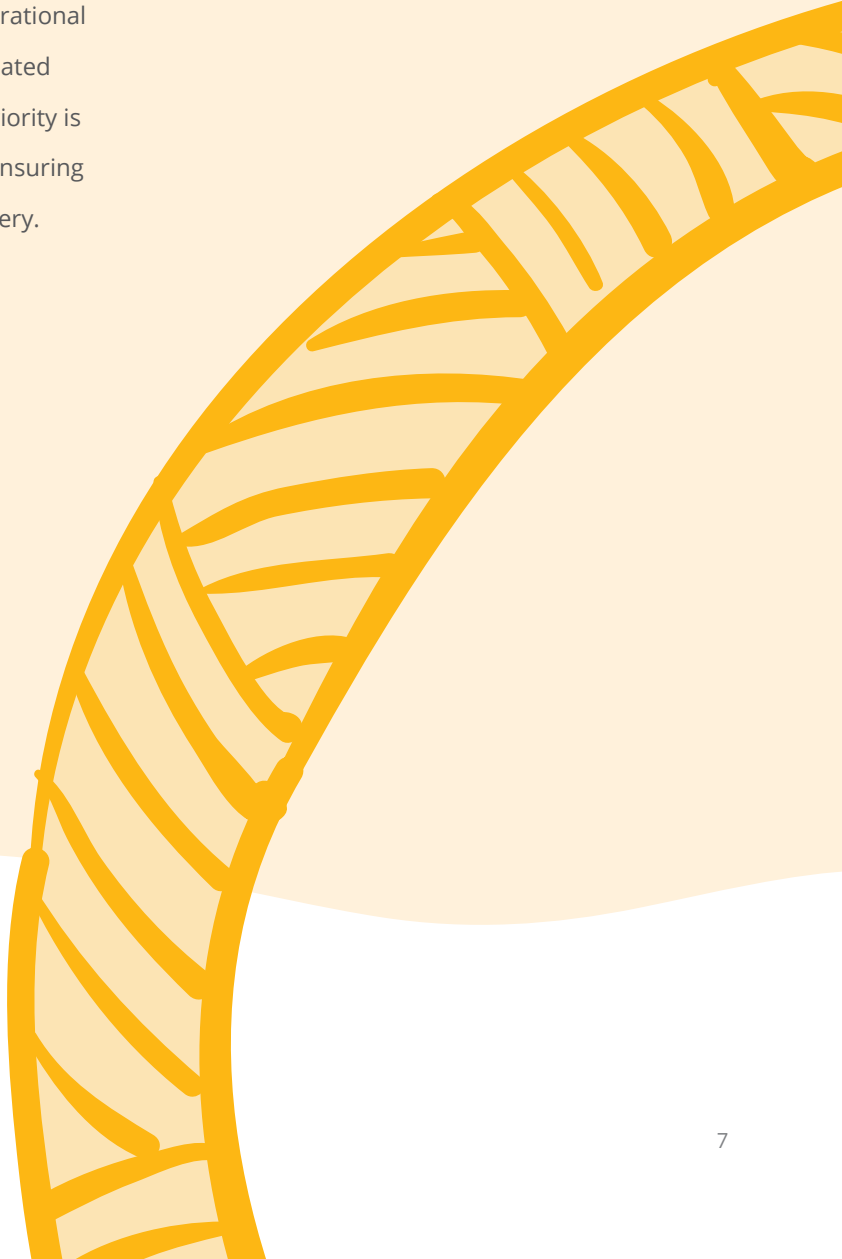
## Our key focus areas, key strategies, and success measures

We are committed to tracking the impact of our strategies through meaningful and specific measures.

We are also committed to developing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific measures in consultation with local communities.

The Strategic Plan sets our high-level direction and detailed implementation activities are outlined in our annual Operational Plan and Stakeholder Engagement Plan, each with associated measures and targets. Progress against each strategic priority is assessed by aggregating the results for these activities, ensuring a clear and direct connection between strategy and delivery.

This approach promotes transparency, strengthens accountability, and supports responsiveness to emerging needs and opportunities.



## Priority

## Key strategies

### Healthy communities

Improved health and wellbeing outcomes for our communities



- › Commission services and initiatives that address identified local health and wellbeing needs, with a strong focus on improving outcomes for First Nations peoples
- › Support, monitor, and evaluate activities and services to drive continuous improvement of health outcomes and efficiency
- › Promote and support health literacy initiatives as a foundation for improving health and wellbeing outcomes
- › Strengthen the participation of both the health workforce and people with lived and living experience in service design and quality improvement

### Health equity

Equitable access to safe, appropriate, and quality care



- › Embed equity in all commissioning and investment decisions to improve access and outcomes for communities most in need
- › Support First Nations-led design and implementation of culturally safe models of care that increase access and improve outcomes
- › Strengthen access and coordination of care for rural, remote, and priority populations through locally responsive and innovative service approaches
- › Plan and commence the journey towards establishing Indigenous Data Governance structures, in line with the CARE principles, that will enable localised Indigenous Data Sovereignty
- › Tackle the structural causes of poor health outcomes through advocacy, collaboration with our partners and local communities, and culturally responsive service design

### Healthy system

Integrated and coordinated care



- › Raise awareness of existing services and develop referral pathways to support the health workforce and consumers to better navigate the health system
- › Connect care across the system by working with partners to improve service integration, access, equity, and cultural safety
- › Facilitate opportunities for collaboration between services and networking across health professions
- › Empower multidisciplinary team care models through investment in innovative and best practice pilot programs, training, and support



## Priority

## Key strategies

### Healthy workforce

Supported and sustainable health workforce



- › Strengthen the health workforce through capacity building and quality improvement and by supporting workforce pipeline and recruitment initiatives
- › Facilitate opportunities for peer support and networking that promote health workforce wellbeing and connection
- › Strengthen workforce readiness for disaster and emergency response and recovery through training, coordination, and support systems
- › Partner with the health workforce and stakeholders to explore and implement innovations that improve access, quality, coordination, and/or efficiency
- › Work with partners to build the cultural capability of the health workforce and strengthen the delivery of culturally safe and appropriate care

### Healthy intelligence

Advancing healthcare with data-driven insights and digital innovation



- › Drive a collaborative approach to data sharing and insights, working with partners to build a shared, actionable understanding of regional health needs, priorities, and outcomes
- › Leverage robust data and evidence to inform strategic investment decisions, influence policy, and drive measurable health improvements
- › Champion the interoperability and integration of digital health systems by aligning with best-practice national standards
- › Strengthen internal digital infrastructure and business processes to drive strategy implementation, operational efficiency, and transparent, data-driven reporting

### Healthy organisation

High performing organisation



- › Develop a capable and engaged internal workforce and embed a values-driven culture
- › Enhance brand recognition and more effectively share our impact with stakeholders and the community
- › Maintain and strengthen best practice corporate and clinical governance
- › Diversify funding streams and enhance financial sustainability
- › Develop and implement a Cultural Capability Framework to build organisational cultural safety and support workforce capability

## Joint Regional Needs Assessment (JRNA) themes

The JRNA plays a central role in guiding our strategic planning and investment decisions. The identified health and service needs inform not only the services we commission, but also how we coordinate care and deliver capacity building to strengthen the system's ability to respond. This ensures that our work is grounded in evidence and aligned to the specific priorities of our region. Those themes are:



Access



Child and  
Maternal Health



First Nations  
Health



Older Persons  
Health



Mental Health  
and Wellbeing



Preventative  
Health



Equity



Workforce



Healthy Living



Chronic Conditions



Scan the QR code  
to read the JRNA or visit  
[nqphn.com.au/JRNA](https://nqphn.com.au/JRNA)

## NQPHN Indigenous Healing Mandala artwork By Luke Mallie

Many of the artwork elements featured throughout this report are part of the NQPHN Indigenous Healing Mandala. We proudly acknowledge the talented artist, Luke Mallie, for his creation of this meaningful mandala. To learn more about the story behind the mandala, scan the QR code, or visit: [nqphn.com.au/about-us/nqphn-indigenous-healing-mandala](https://nqphn.com.au/about-us/nqphn-indigenous-healing-mandala)



## Definitions

### Term

### Definition

#### Commissioning

A continuous process of identifying local health needs, designing and procuring services to meet those needs, and monitoring and evaluating outcomes. NQPHN's commissioning approach is defined in the Commissioning Framework.

#### Cultural capability

The knowledge, skills, behaviours and organisational systems needed to work respectfully and effectively with First Nations peoples. It involves ongoing learning, self-reflection, and a commitment to understanding the impacts of colonisation, valuing cultural knowledge, and adapting practices to ensure culturally safe and responsive care.

#### Cultural safety

An environment where First Nations peoples' presence is welcomed and respected, their experiences are believed and validated, their cultures are centred and valued, their advice is listened to and acted upon, their knowledge and skills are recognised and supported, and they do not experience racism in any form. In the health context, cultural safety is determined by the person receiving care and requires ongoing reflection by those providing health care.

#### Health and wellbeing

A person's overall state of physical, mental, and social wellbeing, encompassing not just the absence of illness but the presence of positive factors that enable individuals, families, and communities to thrive.

#### Health workforce

The people who deliver or support the delivery of health care services, including clinical and support staff across primary, specialist, and hospital settings. NQPHN has a strong focus on the primary care workforce - general practitioners, nurses, allied health professionals, Indigenous Health Workers, pharmacists, mental health professionals and others.

#### Innovation

The development and implementation of new or improved ideas, practices, technologies, or models of care. Innovation in health involves thinking differently to solve problems, respond to emerging needs, and create more effective, efficient and equitable care.

#### Integration / integrated

The process of coordinating and aligning health services and systems to deliver more connected, person-centred care. Integration aims to reduce fragmentation and to improve efficiency, coordination and continuity of care, and patient and provider experience.

#### Primary healthcare

Community-based health care for individuals and families across a broad range of health needs. Primary care includes general practice, community pharmacy, allied health, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, and community mental health services. It plays a vital role in prevention, early intervention, coordination of care, and ongoing management of health conditions.

#### Priority populations

Groups identified as needing focused attention or resources due to specific health needs or disparities in access or outcomes. This includes First Nations peoples (recognising their unique status as Australia's First Peoples), people in rural or remote areas, people with limited access to healthcare, culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) communities, people with disabilities, older adults, LGBTIQ+ communities, and people at risk of poor health outcomes due to biological, environmental, behavioural, or social factors.

#### Workforce pipeline activities

Initiatives that build the future health workforce by promoting health careers, supporting education and training pathways, and creating local opportunities for people to pursue and sustain roles in the health sector.

