

# North Queensland Medicare Urgent Care Clinic Information Session

Upcoming funding opportunities for the  
Cairns and Mackay regions

Northern Queensland Primary Health Network

Torres and Cape | Cairns | Townsville | Mackay





*Northern Queensland Primary Health Network (NQPHN)  
acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and  
seas on which we live and work, and pay our respects to  
Elders past and present.*



# Introductions



**Gill Yearsley**

Executive Director  
Health Services  
Commissioning



**Gilyan Thorn**

NQ Health  
Priorities Lead



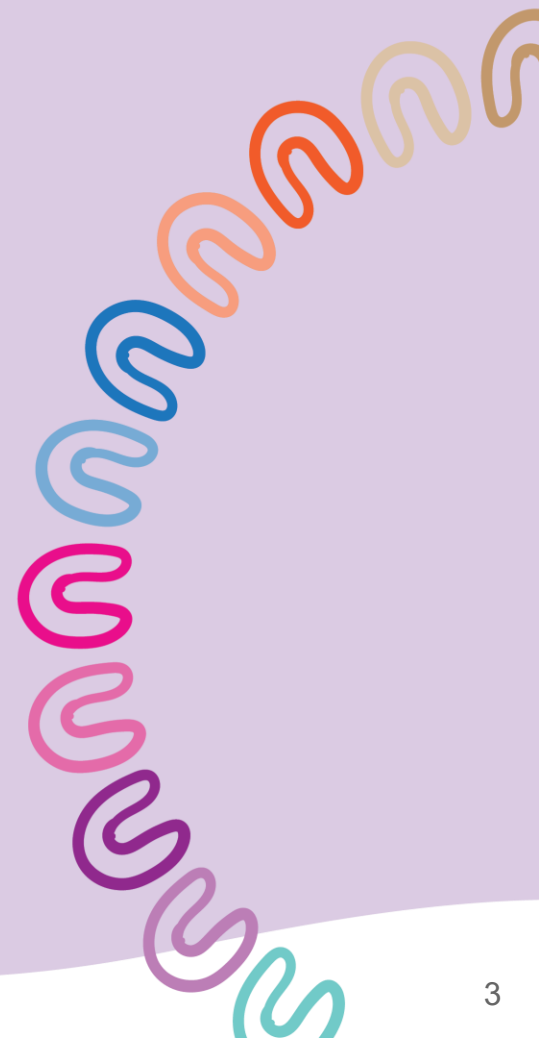
**Dr Shenae Calleja**

Service Planning and  
Design Manager –  
Health Priorities

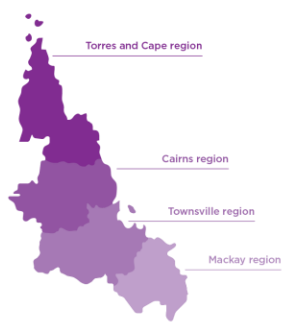


**Chloe Voss**

Senior Service Planning  
and Design Officer –  
Health Priorities



## NQPHN region



~70

staff across three offices –  
Cairns, Townsville, and Mackay

Established

1 July 2015

From 2021 to 2046, our population is  
projected to increase by

35% to  
909,807

722,606

residents in North Queensland, including

75,693

Indigenous people (10.8% of our population and 10.3% of total  
Australian Indigenous population) Source: Queensland Health



31 Local Government  
Areas (LGAs)

22 out of 31  
LGAs have people  
living in very  
remote areas

79.8%  
of our population  
live in 'outer  
regional Australia'

7.2%  
of our population  
live in 'remote' or  
'very remote' areas

26.8% of our population are in the most  
disadvantaged quintile as per the SEIFA index



26.3%

of our population have one or more long-term  
health conditions



8.2%

The most common long-term health condition  
for our region was Mental Health conditions  
(including depression and anxiety)



5.4%

of our population are in need of assistance with  
a profound or severe disability

10.8%

of our  
population speak a  
language other than  
English at home

15.1%

of our  
population were  
born overseas



5.1%

of our region's population are either currently  
or have previously served in the Australian  
Defence Force

4 Hospital and Health Services



13 ACCHOs



62 Residential Aged Care Homes



181  
general  
practices



1,609  
general  
practitioners



3,191  
allied health  
professionals



194  
pharmacies

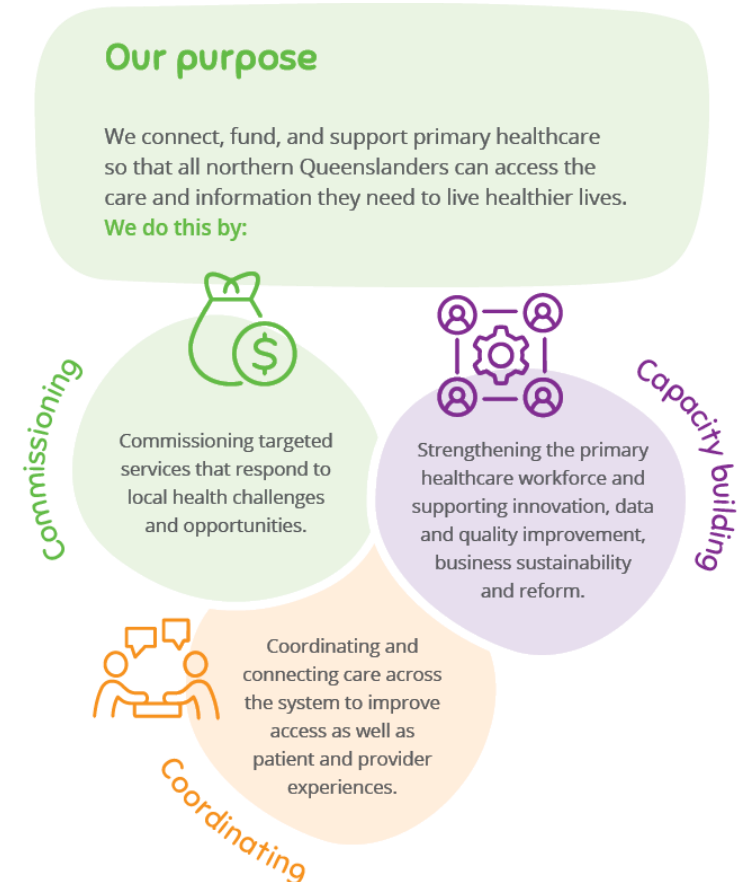
3,642/100,000

Potentially Preventable Hospitalisations  
(National average 2,793/100,000 – 2017/18)



Current as at November 2023.

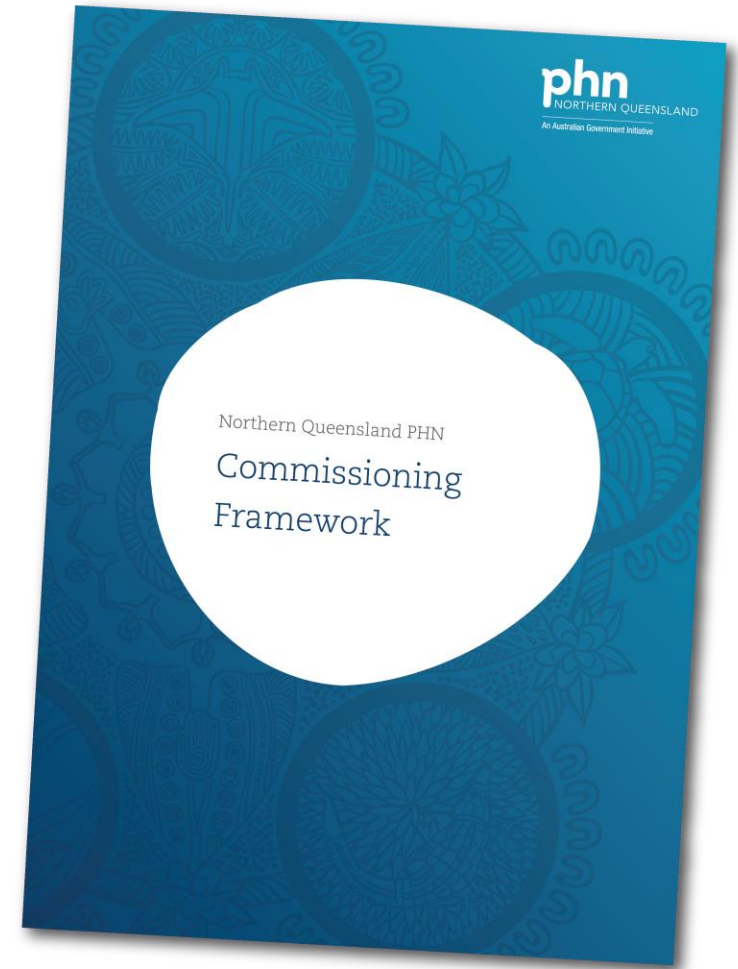
# NQPHN Strategic Plan 2025-28



# NQPHN Commissioning Framework

The Commissioning Framework outlines NQPHN's approach to commissioning, and communicates our commitment to codesign with our partners and provides a set of principles for making decisions. It also guides consistent and best practice commissioning across the organisation.

The Commissioning Framework can be read here:  
[www.nqphn.com.au/commissioning/commissioning-framework](http://www.nqphn.com.au/commissioning/commissioning-framework)



## Background

- As part of a recent Federal Election commitment, additional funding is anticipated to expand the Medicare Urgent Care Clinic program, including potential clinics in Cairns and Mackay
- Australian Government has committed to \$366.4 million to establish a further 50 Medicare Urgent Care Clinics (Medicare UCCs) over 3 years (2025-26 to 2027- 28), throughout Australia, bringing the total number of Medicare UCCs to 137.
- Two currently in operation in the NQPHN region (Cairns and Townsville)





## Program goals

- Provide short term, episodic care for urgent conditions that are not immediately life-threatening
- Offering 'no wrong door' entry point to access episodic urgent medical care, including walk-in and ambulance diversion
- Provide a welcoming, compassionate, culturally appropriate, person-centred, and safe environment that is inclusive for all people accessing quality care
- Reduce demand on hospital EDs
- Provide care closer to home
- Improve coordination between primary and acute care



## Operational Guidance

- The Medicare Urgent Care Clinics Operational Guidance has been developed by the Australian Government in consultation with state and territory governments
- Outlines the scope and minimum services to be offered at clinics and are reviewed on a regular basis
- [Read here](#)



## Lessons learnt

- High demand in regional areas
- Stakeholder collaboration (PHNs, QAS, HHSs, local General Practice) is critical
- Marketing and education essential to increase community awareness
- Flexible, locally tailored models drive success



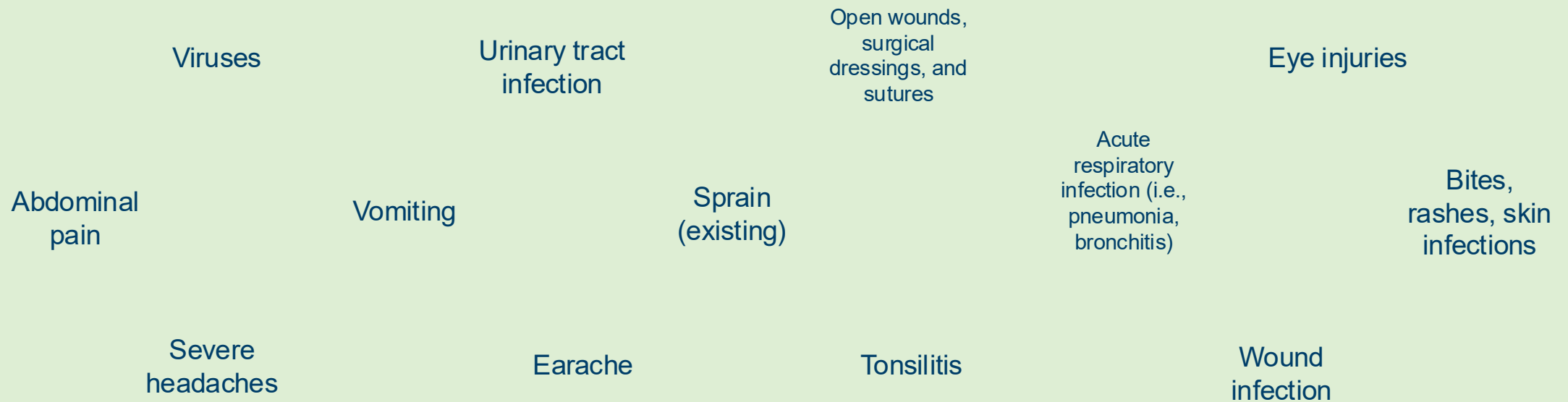
## NQPHN Medicare Urgent Care Clinic data

The top reasons for presentation UCCs in the NQPHN region since opening are:

- laceration
- urinary tract infection (UTI)
- rash
- abdominal pain
- respiratory tract infection
- skin infection

# Common emergency department presentations

Emergency department presentations that were not medical emergencies and could have presented to Medicare Urgent Care Clinic conditions include:



# Choosing the right care

- The *Choose the Right Care* flyer was developed to help patients, families, and healthcare referrers understand the most appropriate healthcare setting based on urgency and need.
- Medicare Urgent Care Clinics provide short-term, episodic care for urgent but non-life-threatening conditions.
- UCCs are not a replacement for a patient's regular GP and do not provide ongoing care or chronic disease management.
- [Medicare Urgent Care Clinics \(UCCs\) | Northern Queensland Primary Health Network](#)



## What's next?

- Funding confirmation from DoHDA
- NQPHN will continue to update stakeholders
- Expression of Interest (EOI) is open. NQPHN will provide updates to those registered concerning next steps in the process.
- To keep up to date with Medicare Urgent Care Clinic funding opportunities, please register your interest by scanning the QR code
- <https://forms.office.com/r/t0Md4dMiqB>

Expression of Interest: Medicare  
Urgent Care Clinic (UCC) Funding -  
Northern Queensland

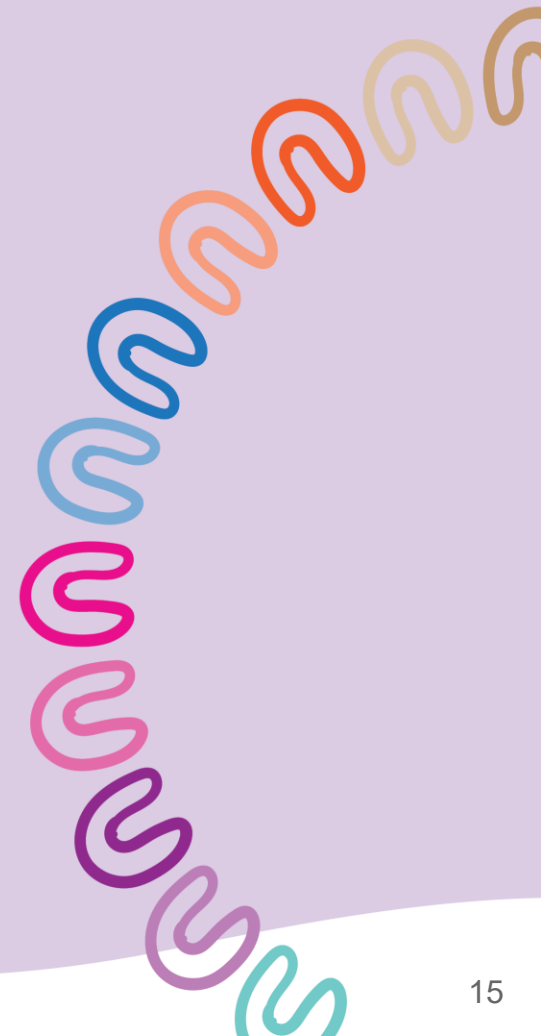




# Questions

Thank you for your engagement in today's session.

Any additional questions can be sent to  
[healthpriorities@nqphn.com.au](mailto:healthpriorities@nqphn.com.au)





An Australian Government Initiative

# Thank you!

[support@nqphn.com.au](mailto:support@nqphn.com.au) [www.nqphn.com.au](http://www.nqphn.com.au)    

