



North and West Remote Health

# Annual Report

2015-2016





## Year in Review

In 2015/16 North and West Remote Health (NWRH) successfully rebranded and transitioned its business activities as a leading not for profit health service provider in rural and remote Queensland. This year saw the company contracted by the Western Queensland Primary Health Network and other Government agencies and while the transition of business was smooth, the health workforce suffered major uncertainty while contract negotiations were undertaken. This continues to remain a challenge as all sectors that fund NWRH undertake major reform in 2016/2017.

NWRH has used the current transitional environment to build strong partnerships for both service provision and tender opportunities. This stakeholder engagement and capacity to successfully transition in and out of services provided an opportunity for NWRH to expand its services in the Aged Care and Disability sectors. In December 2015, the organisation was successful in its application to become an approved Aged Care Provider for Residential Aged Care in Doomadgee, Mornington Island and Normanton and Home Care Provider across the North West and Lower Gulf areas, adding to its portfolio of Community Home Support Program services. In addition an application to become a registered provider under the National Disability Insurance Scheme was successful with referrals being received for the Townsville and North West areas.

### STRONG PARTNERSHIPS

NWRH has used the current transitional environment to build strong partnerships for both service provision and tender opportunities



The organisation structure is assessed and adapted to ensure it continues to concentrate on achieving operational efficiencies and remains flexible and responsive in a changing environment. Capacity in leadership was achieved through the development of an internal Organisation Learning Framework, specifically designed to assist NWRH management in supporting their

teams to achieve best practice service delivery. In addition NWRH has continued its commitment to quality improvement through achieving a number of accreditations. These achievements and some of the many major milestones from this year are highlighted within this report.

Finally, the commitment by Directors, Executive and all employees to be a culturally competent organisation has been evident in the completion of the first Reconciliation Action Plan which embeds cultural competency through all facets of the organisation. This has been achieved by the hard work of the internal Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group.

I wish to thank the Directors, Senior Executive and Team Leaders for continually providing guidance and achieving outcomes, but in particular I would like to thank the broad range of NWRH employees who show dedication and commitment in providing services to their clients and communities on a daily basis.

*Evelyn Edwards*  
Chief Executive Officer





# Program Overview

## AGED CARE & DISABILITY

➤ The year saw NWRH increase its community capacity through commencement of operations for three Residential Aged Care homes in Doomadgee (Ngooderi House), Normanton (Kukatja Place) and Mornington Island (Kuba Natha Hostel).

➤ NWRH also increased capacity in delivering Community Home Support services (CHSP & HCP) taking on services in Burketown, Dajarra, Karumba, Birdsville, Bedourie, McKinlay, Mornington Island, Doomadgee and Normanton. These services include:

- Providing domestic assistance;
- Meals on wheels;
- Personal care;
- Social support (group and individual);
- Transport;
- Specialised support services (including allied health); and
- Yard maintenance.



These services have been essential to the communities and our clients to maintain a level of independence and choice.

➤ In late 2015 NWRH successfully registered as an NDIS (National Disability Insurance Scheme) provider in preparation for July 2016 rollout of the scheme, again increasing capacity to deliver services to regional, rural and remote areas.

➤ Through the NDIS rollout new relationships have been established with communities in Townsville and the surrounding regional areas.



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**INCREASING CAPACITY TO  
DELIVER SERVICES TO REGIONAL,  
RURAL AND REMOTE AREAS.**

## HEALTH PROMOTION

➤ NWRH Health Promotion Framework has been developed with the aim of providing a common language and high level direction to support collaborative health promotion planning among NWRH regional offices and external stakeholders.

➤ NWRH initiated the Health Literacy Promotion (HeLP) initiative; a multi-faceted strategy and multi-sectoral partnership to tackle current preventable chronic disease problem.

➤ Throughout the year NWRH Health Promotion Officers conducted 6,652 occasions of service

➤ As part of NWRH's Supportive Environment Initiative for Physical Activity (SEIPA) initiative, we have engaged the wider Mount Isa community to undertake a walkability audit of their neighbourhood. A detailed report has been produced and presented to Mount Isa City Council. Mount Isa City Council is seeking expert advice to verify the findings. NWRH will work in partnership with Mount Isa City Council and other stakeholders to address the identified issues.

➤ NWRH worked with Burke Shire Council on Supportive Environment Initiative for Physical Activity (SEIPA) project and developed a NWRH walkability audit tool applicable to small rural regional towns in Australia.

➤ NWRH facilitated the establishment of Mount Isa Health Alliance (MIHA); a multi-sectoral partnership approach to preventative health.

➤ Through the Healthy Kids program run by NWRH Central West through schools and community events promoted healthy lifestyle choices for kids and families and good mental health.

➤ In collaboration with local Government and the Western Queensland PHN NWRH have been delivering the Health Education Reaching Blokes and Sheilas (HERBS) program, focussed on providing effective delivery of NWRH services to harder to reach populations, such as the work camp crews in Diamantina Shire.

Throughout the year  
NWRH Health Promotion  
Officers conducted

**6,652**

OCCASIONS OF SERVICE





Through the Healthy Kids program the NWRH Central West team have had a large involvement in schools and community events throughout 2015/16 promoting

## HEALTHY LIFESTYLE CHOICES

for kids and families and good mental health.



Children and Family Centre), Normanton Recovery Centre and various community Womens groups. Dietitians regularly choose culturally appropriate foods to prepare (e.g. damper, bustard and array of stews).

### EARLY INTERVENTION AND OUTREACH ALLIED HEALTH

➤ Throughout the year NWRH provided 26,582 Outreach and Remote Primary Health Care and 11,387 Mental Health and Wellbeing occasions of service.

➤ Throughout 2015/16 NWRH also worked on wider community engagement throughout the North West with various behaviour change communication (BCC) activities in the community including:

- NWRH hosted health promotion stalls including various community engagement activities at the McKinlay Crocodile Dundee Market and anniversary celebrations.
- Facilitation of the National Close The Gap community event in partnership with Queensland Health including various promotional activities.
- Facilitation of multiple health promotion group activities in the community.

➤ Cooking classes have also been consistently implemented by the NWRH Allied Health team. Lead by the Dietitians these classes have a focus on chronic disease management. Throughout 2015/16 classes have been run in Boulia, Cloncurry, Camooweal, Mount Isa (in conjunction with Ngukuthati

➤ NWRH and Central West Hospital and Health Service have developed a client referral pathway to reduce confusion for referrers, save on administration time and clarify the roles of service providers to ensure more timely and coordinated care for clients.

➤ The itinerary structure allows NWRH to deploy staff to areas of greater need if there is limited demand for a service in a particular community. Internal systems including use of remote access electronic records and with the Clarity Client Management System allows clinicians to respond to demand, waitlists and tracking lists in real time. This reduces the risk of losing clients to follow up, clarifies response time expectations for referrers and clients and enables managers to support clinician workloads.

➤ School health checks are completed annually at the beginning of each year. This covers all schools, kindergartens and day care centres in Normanton and Karumba with over 300 young people having full health assessments with a General Practitioner, Nurse, Aboriginal Health Worker, Wellbeing Officer and Healthy for Life Coordinator. School health checks in Doomadgee and Mornington Island are carried out by NWRH in partnership with the Royal Flying Doctor Service.

➤ Wellbeing screening is conducted in the schools for Grades 8, 9 and 10 using the Westerman Aboriginal Symptom Checklist – Youth (WASC-Y tool) to assess for:

- Depression;
- Suicide;
- Alcohol and drug use;
- Impulsivity;
- Anxiety; and
- Cultural resilience.

76% of participants were identified at risk requiring follow-up support facilitated or delivered by NWRH clinicians.



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CARE FOR CLIENTS.





## RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

NWRH has been very successful throughout this last year in adjusting visionary intent and operational alignment to better serve Australia's First Nationals Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Health and Wellbeing delivery; in particular the teamwork and synergy building in and across all levels of the organisation.

Some of the best stories came from the connections and relationships affirmed from the Board of Directors to Senior Management and Team Management, to Aboriginal Councils and Mayors, through to the troops on the ground in working together in promoting and delivering improved remote Health and Wellbeing services.

This work was made possible by Board and Senior Management direction and release of staff in allowing the proper formation and function of the RAP Working Group in processes attached to the NWRH Respect RAP and prioritising the important deliverables therein.

This constituency of good will has been engendered by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff engaged and invigorated by the changes that the RAP activity has delivered.

Some early successes from the RAP Working Group included the drafting of policies and procedures such as the Welcome to and Acknowledgement of Country and the Indigenous Employment Strategy which engendered confidence in both the Board of Directors and Senior Management and changed the way that respect was brokered and recruitment was approached by NWRH.

The Trauma Grief and Loss Policy and Procedure developed after the first two policies and procedures has redefined the way that Aboriginal and Torres Strait staff are treated through times of family and community sorry business based on local cultural protocols.

NWRH boasts an increase of workforce identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islanders of more than 10% for the financial year to 36% at year end.



## Key Achievements

The **TOTAL OCCASIONS OF SERVICE** for NWRH throughout the year total: **70,904**

This includes some of the following statistics:

Outreach and Remote  
Primary Health Care:

 **26,582**

Mothers and  
Babies:

 **8,214**

Mental Health and  
Wellbeing:

 **11,387**

Health Promotion  
Individual contacts:

 **6,652**

Chronic Disease  
Care Coordination:

 **18,069**

Health Promotion  
Events and Groups:

 **177**

Throughout 2015/16  
NWRH delivered

**34,641**

occasions of service to clients  
who identified as **Aboriginal or  
Torres Strait Islander**



A total of **11,063**  
occasion  
of service were delivered  
to clients by NWRH  
through the **HOME CARE  
PACKAGE** program. Of  
these, this figure includes:

**3,197**  
meals



**2,328**  
transport  
services



**2,778**  
centre  
based day  
care hours



With the update of additional  
**Community Home Support  
Program (CHSP)** services across  
the **North West and Lower Gulf**  
**January up** until July 2016 saw

**4,681**

individual services  
provided by NWRH



NWRH's **TOTAL NUMBER  
OF CLIENTS SERVICED**  
throughout 2015/16 equal:

**4,023**  **5,113**  
Males Females

# Financial Overview

The Company's short and long term objectives are to design and deliver solutions with individual communities and funders to help build local critical mass for holistic fit for purpose primary health and wellbeing, aged care and disability services. Its principal activities for the 2015/16 year were to support, enhance and deliver primary health care to the people of Central West, North West and coastal regions of Queensland and to respond effectively to local health care needs.

The Company measures performance through achieving contractual obligations and milestones with grant funders so as to achieve health outcomes in rural and remote communities.

During the 2015/16 financial year the company managed 36 (2014/15: 37) individual grant programs totaling \$20.2m (2014/15: \$20.9m). The grant income received from contracts during the 2015/16 financial year were a mix of Western Queensland Primary Health Network 62% (2014/15: 0%) Commonwealth 27% (2014/15: 96%), State 10% (2014/15: 4%) and non - Government funded Departments 1% (2014/15: 0%).

The surplus achieved from ordinary activities amounted to \$60,120 (2014/15: \$271,133).

A copy of the full financial report and auditor's report has been provided to the members and all funding Departments of the Company.

## Quality Improvement

NWRH has undergone a substantial amount of quality improvement throughout the year:

- NWRH has retained AGPAL accreditation for Gulf Health Services in Normanton.
- NWRH achieved accreditation and is compliant against AS/NZS ISO 9001: 2015 standards.
- NWRH is approved as a Residential and Community Aged Care Service provider.
- NWRH's Residential Aged Care facilities in Normanton, Mornington Island and Doomadgee are accredited through the Australian Aged Care Quality Agency.
- NWRH has been registered as an NDIS service provider.

# Governance

The Company is overseen by a Board of six highly qualified Directors who have experience in all aspects of corporate governance and health. Meeting monthly, they ensure strong governance and oversight of all elements of NWRH operations. The Board sub committees include:

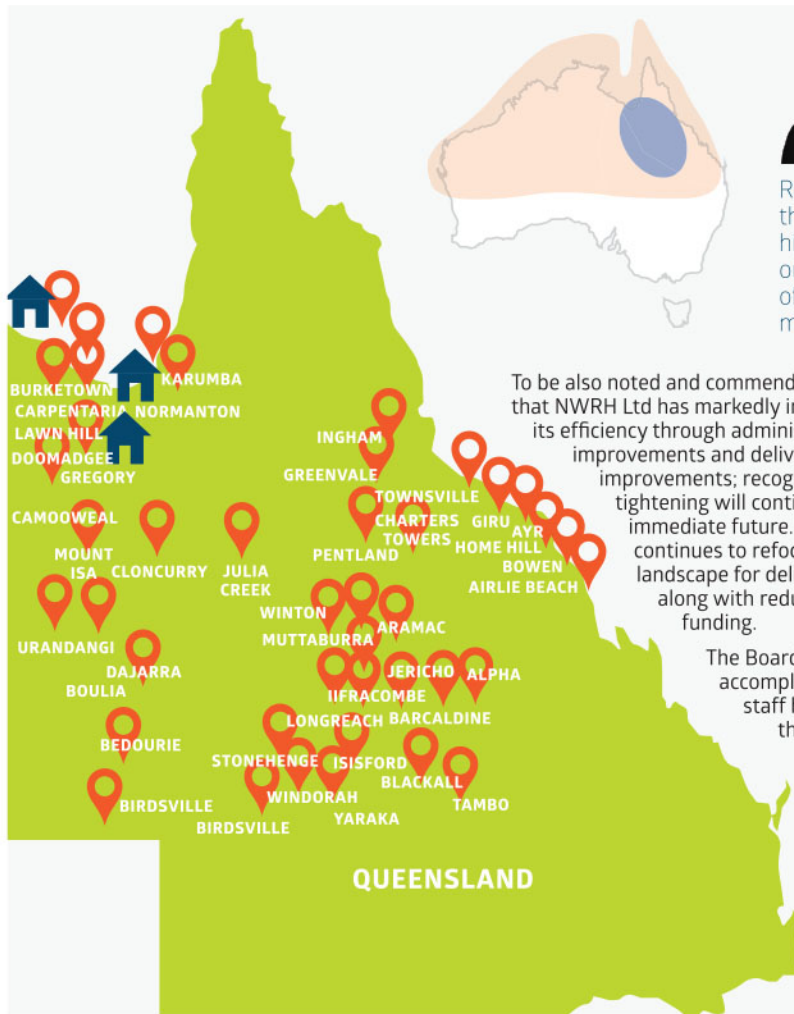
- Audit and Risk.
- Cultural Advisory.
- Strategic Development and Stakeholder Engagement.
- Clinical Governance.
- Workplace Health and Safety.
- Change Management (established to respond to emerging changes in the health and social services sector as required).

This multilayer approach to governance continues to provide transparency and insight into all elements of the organisation's operation.

The Board and Senior Executive Management undertake annual Strategic Planning activities to monitor new opportunities. NWRH's strategic vision in 2015/16 was driven towards Primary Health and Wellbeing opportunities for rural and remote communities.

The organisation is managed by four highly skilled and experienced Managers, led by the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) who has held various roles within the organisation for 20 years including the last 6 years as CEO.

The NWRH Corporate structure is designed on a "place based" principle with the current areas of responsibility described as Central West, North West, Lower Gulf, East Coast and Corporate, this allows concentration on local partnerships and program activities to be maintained at all times.



## Our Future

Phil Barwick, Chairman NWRH

Reflecting on the 2016 year for the company it is very apparent that North and West Remote Health has been delivering its highest ever levels of primary health care services. This saw our staffing reach record numbers around 200 and our suite of programs to be broader than ever including a strategic move into a new arena of Residential Aged Care Facilities.

To be also noted and commended is that NWRH Ltd has markedly increased its efficiency through administration improvements and delivery improvements; recognising that fiscal tightening will continue for the immediate future. The company continues to refocus now as the landscape for delivery changes along with reducing levels of funding.

The Board along with the accomplished executive staff has developed the company planning for further expanding our services and markets, growing our business sustainably and

continuing to build our visibility and reputation.

This diversification that has been evident in recent years auguring for the continued growth in primary health care services that we are planning for will be driven by NWRH's commitment to:

- Contributing to solving the challenges of health and social issues in our geographical footprint;
- Piloting new ideas and delivery models;
- Developing quality accurate data that proves our service delivery outcomes; and
- Quality improvement in the health consumer experience with NWRH services.

These are the company's essential drivers for the ultimate purpose of NWRH that strives for improved health for people in healthier communities.

*Phil Barwick*  
Chairman







North and West Remote Health

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