



# NWRH

ANNUAL REPORT

2018 - 2019



*Phil  
Barwick*

CHAIRMAN, NWRH

## MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

**During this 2018/19 year NWRH has continued to support the health and wellbeing of residents throughout Northern and Western Queensland where our obligations take us. This includes our remote communities in the lower gulf area and many other smaller communities between the east coast and the Northern Territory border where people are extremely vulnerable and in need of our brand of quality primary health care services.**

This year aged care services have been the service sector which has absorbed much of the organisations energy and resources, both in residential care and in-home care. The challenges faced by the NWRH Board and Executive in this sector have been extraordinary throughout the past 12-months. Collectively, we have welcomed the Royal Commission which is now well underway and we sympathise with many elements of submissions being provided by other service providers in similar environments around the country. NWRH too has provided a submission to the commission; outlining our unique set of challenges operating small facilities in arguably some of the most remote locations in Australia.

As you will see in this report, NWRH also retained strong focus on delivering quality allied health and wellbeing services within our geographical footprint; with demand continuing to increase across our many communities. We continue to increase service levels to meet the heavy needs of Aboriginal health across all age groups and communities, and as determined by the general aging of the population.

The environment for delivering primary health care services remains sadly flawed by competition policy; with little regard to the population health outcomes, that could be better achieved by ramping up a primary health care agenda instead of the continual

tightening of budgets that at times seems to be the only driving force involved by our influencers.

Nonetheless; readers will be impressed by the high level of outcomes and services shown in the body of this report, and the extensive framework of quality standards that NWRH upholds across all of its services.

In April 2019 an additional Director was appointed to the NWRH Board to strengthen clinical governance in Aged Care. Sandra Glaister has an extensive twenty-plus year career operating at senior levels in aged services across both not for profit and the private sector. Ms Glaisters career has spanned strategic and operational leadership within the portfolios of home care, residential aged care, retirement living, acute (hospital) care and disaster management, with experience also in state and federal advisory groups and we welcome her to the team.

In closing; I want to thank all of our valued staff and our Executive team for their continued efforts during the past year to provide all of these services and also extend sincere gratitude to the Board of Directors who continue to be resilient and to make valuable and productive decisions to further the objectives of the company and the health of the organisation.



*Evelyn  
Edwards*

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

**As I reflect on 2018/2019 it constantly amazes me just how much our organisation has achieved in providing quality health services to a broad geographic region. This year saw an increased commitment to improving quality care to the senior members of our communities and in particular the three residential aged care facilities in Doomadgee, Mornington Island and Normanton. Partnerships in these communities are essential to ensuring**

**the services we manage operate in a culturally safe way and I would like to thank our partners for their contribution in making these services work.**

While the following pages provide a snapshot of activity throughout the year, there is so much more to the NWRH story:

We have developed **new partnerships** through funding initiatives such as the Townsville Hospital and Health Service Transition Care program; providing post-operative care to clients in their home setting, and the Northern Queensland Primary Health Network place based mental health stepped care programs in the Croydon, Etheridge, Flinders and Richmond Shires.

NWRH was proud to be an emergency response service delivery partner in the NQ Connect program coordinated by Western Queensland and Northern Queensland Primary Health Networks, the State Governments Department of Communities, Disability Services and Seniors and the communities of Hughenden, Richmond Cloncurry, Julia Creek and McKinlay. As these communities continue to recover from the devastation of drought and flood NWRH provides ongoing support through mental health and wellbeing programs.

**Representation and advocacy** remain priority areas to highlight the challenges remote communities face in accessing

quality primary health, disability and aged care services. As remote aged care service providers NWRH has been able to increase focus on these challenges as the Australian Healthcare and Hospital Associations representative on the National Aged Care Alliance. This alliance is a gathering of industry organisations working in the aged care sector who work closely with the Federal Government across the broad aged care spectrum. Aged Care Workforce models and continuity remains a focus through representation on the Remote Accord convened as a recommendation of the Aged Care Workforce Strategy Taskforce report.

### **Advocacy through formal submissions**

such as the Accessibility and Quality of Mental Health Services in Rural and Remote Australia and Royal Commission into aged Care Quality and Safety continue to keep the spotlight on rural and remote workforce and service sustainability.

Operational efficiency continues to be a priority with a number of concurrent projects such as the central intake, triage and client appointment support and program delivery improvement outcomes. An organisation restructure within senior management was undertaken with the implementation of a new Manager Community Programs and Contract Compliance position based in Mount Isa in January.



## MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO (CONTINUED)

**COMMITMENT TO QUALITY** has been the cornerstone of NWRH activities throughout the year, most importantly the improvements to aged care services would not have been possible without the additional support from the Commonwealth Department of Health. NWRH provides services across a number of sectors and the following quality improvement processes were undertaken to support the program objectives:

- Successful transition of NWRH Aged Care services to the new Aged Care Quality Standards
- Development and implementation of a comprehensive internal audit schedule for the three Aged Care facilities against the new Aged Care Quality Standards
- Commenced second cycle of accreditation against ISO 9001:2015 (Quality Management System) Standards

- Commenced accreditation against the NDIS Practice Standards as a NDIS Registered Provider

Once again, the passion and commitment of our dedicated staff shines through in the delivery of quality services and strong partnerships. I would like to thank the Board, Senior Executive and staff for their contributions to this vibrant organisation. I look forward to the 2019/2020 year and the opportunities it will bring for NWRH.

## ABOUT US



A vibrant, not-for-profit provider of community and outreach based allied health, aged care, wellbeing and disability services across regional, rural and remote Australia, NWRH has evolved around a proud history spanning over 25 years. From a small incorporated association on commencement in 1993; to the present form as a large company that has grown in both size and scope.

Today we are distinguished as a significant Commonwealth and State Government contracted primary health care organisation, servicing over 50 communities.



# NWRH

## NWRH PRINCIPLES



**1.** People own their own health



**2.** Communities control their own health services where possible



**3.** Staff are employed locally, and assisted to build their skills and capabilities



**4.** Flexibility and responsiveness is possible because staff live where they work

## NWRH PURPOSE

*Healthier people in remote, rural and regional communities.*

## ALLIED HEALTH SERVICES

NWRH continued to provide regular and responsive outreach services to rural and remote communities, promoting accessibility and primary health care services to clients that require allied health input. The NWRH allied health team's regular travel schedule allowed continuity of care, more opportunities to increase community health literacy and stronger collaboration and shared care with other local health services.

The NWRH allied health team had another successful year throughout 2018/2019,



providing 20,450 instances of allied health care to people within the North West, Central West and East Coast regions of Queensland.

An increase in this type of service delivery has allowed greater multidisciplinary, and cross sector, collaboration, with input from metropolitan specialists e.g. a client living in the Western Corridor was able to participate in a joint videoconference appointment with his QLD Health endocrinologist and NWRH diabetes educator.

### CLIENT FEEDBACK:

"Valued individualised care planning"

"Consistency and range of services"

"Valued they had the ability to access appointment within a clinic setting or home setting"

"Appreciated the uniqueness of NWRH service delivery"

"Opportunity to participate in one-on-one appointments"

"Flexibility of service delivery which could be tailored to meet client and community demand"

"Appreciated services delivered in a way that clients understand and via an approach which focuses on enhancing quality of life"

In 2018/2019 the allied health team, in between outreach face to face services, also provided

### 800 TELEHEALTH APPOINTMENTS.

This allowed rural and remote clients increased access to more regular service delivery and removed the burden of travel.

NWRH continue service provision in Aboriginal health, continence advice, diabetes education, dementia advice, dietetics, exercise physiology, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, podiatry and speech pathology. During the year the allied health team focused on integrating all aspects of our business to provide a holistic service delivery model which included our mental health, wellbeing, community and disability sectors.





We are grateful for the strong partnerships that were established or strengthened during the year including Western Queensland Primary Health Network (WQPHN), Department of Health, Townsville, North West and Central West Hospital and Health Services, National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), Centre for Rural and Remote Health (CRRH), Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHs), CheckUp, Health Workforce Queensland, Royal Flying Doctors Services, Northern Queensland Primary Health Network and Local Area Councils and many other community organisations.

**Externally the team focused on increasing participant access to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) allied health services, Medicare Benefits Scheme (MBS) services and Aged Care services that allowed goal-oriented support to optimise the functioning and independence of older people.**



## MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

NWRH mental health and wellbeing programs went from strength to strength in the last twelve months including expansion into the communities of Camooweal, Croydon, Forsayth, Einsleigh and Georgetown.

Successful recruitment to several positions in Normanton, Doomadgee and Mount Isa has resulted in significant successes in:

- stakeholder and community engagement
- increased direct client services
- significant positive clinical outcomes for individual clients
- significant positive outcomes related to community capacity building such as the establishment of the inaugural Doomadgee State School Parents and Friends Committee

While hundreds of hours of individual, family and group client intervention have been provided by NWRH in the last year, specific examples of program outcomes tell the real story of the positive impact.

The Indigenous Advancement Strategy delivered in Doomadgee and Mornington Island has successfully provided a video link service for families to connect while a person is incarcerated. Feedback regarding this program activity is that it has had significant positive impact to the morale of the entire community.

**Families report improved school attendance for their children and improved classroom participation, resulting in students supported by NWRH receiving academic rewards.**



The NWRH mental health and wellbeing portfolio includes sixteen distinct programs, ranging from non-clinical, early intervention, prevention and case management programs to specific alcohol and drug, psychological and counselling services delivered to some of the most remote areas in Queensland.

Cultural connections in local community and culturally competent delivery of services continues to be the core driver of services. Strengthening relationships with peak bodies such as the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC), Yellagundgimarra Aboriginal Health Council (YAHC) Doomadgee and the Mornington Island Health Council are examples of how NWRH services are being informed and shaped by local community needs.



**NWRH also assisted with the Government Disaster Recovery efforts in Hughenden, Richmond, Julia Creek, Normanton, Cloncurry and Townsville during the 2019 flood event, being able to provide services at these critical times has been invaluable to these communities.**



## COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

**Our Community, Aged and Disability Services team provide supports that enable older clients and people with a disability to:**

- live independently;
- remain connected to their communities;
- pursue their personal goals, aspirations and objectives; and,
- develop their capacity to more actively engage in a broad scope of activities.

**The provision of aged care services in locations across our footprint has allowed people living in remote and very remote locations the opportunity to age in place at home; retaining connections to their community, kin and country.**

2018/2019 saw an increase in disability supports provided to NDIS participants. This growth enabled more people with disability to achieve their goals and receive, previously unavailable, supports required to enjoy an ordinary life.

During 2018/2019 NWRH provided:



**16,695**  
transport  
trips



**7,095**  
hours of  
domestic  
assistance



**31,609**  
nutritionally  
balanced  
meals



**871**  
HOURS  
of community  
nursing support



**586**  
HOURS  
of  
personal  
care



**1,097**  
HOURS  
of respite



**3,022**  
HOURS  
of domestic  
support  
and home  
maintenance.



## COMMUNITY PROGRAMS (CONTINUED)

These services enabled clients to participate in social and community activities, engage with primary health care providers or access essential services. It also contributed to maintaining healthy communities, support to carers and our clients were able to remain independent in their homes.

It is not only the increased quantity of service delivery across the year that has contributed to positive client outcomes but, the continued quality of service provided by Care Support Workers. NWRH staff are passionate, dedicated and determined; providing outstanding client directed care to a diverse population in unique and challenging circumstances. This is evidenced through the feedback and compliments our services and staff receive:

***“congratulations to the team and organisation on your work and the overwhelming positive feedback from local clients who thoroughly enjoy the visits, activities and excursions”***

***“displays empathy, respect and caring”***

***“thank you for bringing joy into (their) lives”***

***“I don’t know what I’d do without you”***

***“passionate and excited about setting and achieving goals with clients”***

***“is considerate and diligent in performing their duties”***



## RESIDENTIAL AGED CARE

NWRH provides 40 residential aged care places in the communities of Doomadgee (Ngooderi House -10 beds), Normanton (Kukatja Place -15 beds) and Mornington Island (Kuba Natha -15 beds), which are vital to keeping elders connected with families in their communities and on country.

**Occupancy levels in our facilities have been maintained at a high level over the past twelve months, with Doomadgee and Normanton averaging 90 percent and Mornington Island averaging 80 percent permanent admissions.**

Residential Aged Care services are funded by the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Flexible Aged Care Program (NATSIFACP).

The aged care facilities also provide respite services and support the delivery of Community, Aged and Disability Services, in provision of transport, meals, personal and domestic services.

**NWRH is committed to continuous quality improvement and providing safe and appropriate care.**

Throughout this reporting period we have been actively reviewing our practices and processes to align with the Australian Aged Care Quality & Safety Commission's new aged care quality standards, which came in to effect on 1 July 2019.

**A major quality improvement this year has been the implementation of a web based electronic health record platform in our Aged Care Facilities.**

Leecare Solutions' Platinum 5 Software Suite has been in use since May 2019. This initiative has realised significant improvements, including greater accuracy and quality in resident record management, efficiencies in coordination of resident care across multidisciplinary service providers, and management real time visibility of resident care records, facilitating higher level clinical governance.

We continue to work with communities as a trusted and integrated aged care provider in rural and remote Australia, and would like to take this opportunity to thank the key stakeholders who provide invaluable support to our aged care services:

- Gidgee Healing for providing General Practitioner, Nurse Practitioner and Allied Health services to residents in all three of our Residential Aged Care facilities
- North West Hospital and Health Service for providing medical and nursing support to our residents and, particularly for assisting with medication management when required
- Queensland Ambulance Service for emergency response and transport assistance
- My Pathways and Bynoe Community Advancement Co-operative for partnering with us to provide employment opportunities in the lower gulf
- Mornington Shire Council, Doomadgee Aboriginal Shire Council and Carpentaria Shire Council for providing the land and premises our Residential Aged Care facilities occupy, and for assistance with repairs and maintenance
- QLD Police Service for keeping community and Elders safe.



## CENTRAL INTAKE

Corporate Services Townsville welcomed the new addition of the Central Intake team during October 2018. This new business unit is tasked with centralising NWRH referral and appointment pathways by working with our clinicians and team leaders throughout the organisation; work that was previously managed by each local office. Since October 2018 Central Intake have achieved the following results:

**Waitlist management at 22% of total referrals received month on month**

**Total referral reach to date of 18 communities including but not limited to Townsville, Bowen, Burdekin, Charters Towers and Ingham and out to Mount Isa, Birdsville, Boulia, Julia Creek, Cloncurry and the Lower Gulf**

**Referrals received and processed from 132 at commencement to 547 by June 2019 being an increase of 314%**

**Of 547 referrals received by June 2019, 43% were from the North West region, 36% from the Central West Region and 21% from the East Coast**

Since June 2019 there have been further increases in referrals received by Central Intake increasing from 547 to 826 (increase of 51%) and we expect in the 2019-20 financial year these numbers to further increase.

The Central Intake team have done a wonderful job in taking a new program concept from start in October 2018 to firmly consolidate and supporting NWRH clinicians and staff in referral pathway management.



## CELEBRATING OUR PEOPLE & COMMUNITY

The following outlines key achievements and highlights achieved in the community and partnering sector of NWRH operations throughout the 2018/2019 year:

### • CROYDON/ETHERIDGE ENGAGEMENT

NWRH CEO, (Evelyn Edwards), Manager for Cultural and Community Relations, (Randal Ross), Executive Manager for Primary Health Care and Human Resources, (Dominic Sandilands), in addition to North Queensland

Primary Health Networks (Gillian Yearsley) and Acting Operations Manager Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service (Suzanne Riach) travelled to the Croydon, Etheridge, Forsayth and Georgetown communities to conduct high level community engagement activities. Positive outcomes were attained in establishing relationships between the PHN, NWRH and local leaders and health services to ensure the delivery of a clinical model of mental health care for the region.



### • NEAMI PARTNERSHIP

In 2019, NWRH has provided mental health services in the Townsville, Burdekin and Hinchinbrook areas as part of the NEAMI/Connect to Wellbeing referral management project. NEAMI and associated organisations have proven to be valuable partners in meeting demand for Northern Queensland Primary Health Network Stepped Care mental health services in the region.

## CELEBRATING OUR PEOPLE & COMMUNITY (CONTINUED)

### • GEORGETOWN CLINIC

Throughout the beginning of 2019, NWRH worked to establish a local premise in Georgetown to provide Stepped Care mental health services to the Croydon and Etheridge Shires. Service delivery began in early March 2019 and the NWRH Georgetown Clinic opened in May 2019, providing a base of operations in the north.



### • COMMUNITY CONSULTATION DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

In May of this year, the Federal Governments Department of Health visited our North West and Lower Gulf communities. Including the Director and a team member from the Health portfolio, the Assistant Director-Aged Care and the Northern Territory/Queensland State Manager reasonable time at each location was spent with NWRH staff and other stakeholders, touring the Residential Aged Care facilities and meeting clients.

### • HUGHENDEN/RICHMOND COMMUNITY ADVISORY NETWORKS (CAN)

Regular ongoing attendance and representation by NWRH senior staff at CAN meetings ensure NWRH keeps informed regarding the health needs of the community. These meetings are also a key opportunity to engage with other health service providers regarding service provision and planning.



## CELEBRATING OUR PEOPLE & COMMUNITY (CONTINUED)

### • MORNINGTON ISLAND HEALTH ACTION PLAN

NWRH's vision continues to support rural and remote communities to improve their quality of life through health and active lifestyles. Together with individuals, communities, partners and funders the Mornington Island Health Action Plan is designed to deliver solutions to help build local critical mass for holistic, fit for purpose primary health and wellbeing services. NWRH is proud to be a partner in delivering services to achieve the outcomes of this plan.



### • NORTH WEST STUDENT OUTREACH SERVICES

NWRH partnered with the Centre for Rural and Remote Health (CRRH), James Cook University and the North West Hospital and Health Service to allow students to experience community outreach service delivery. Whilst the main student placement and supervision was provided within the North West Community Rehab Program, the Physiotherapy, Speech Pathology and Occupational Therapy students joined our outreach service delivery itinerary to communities such as Boulia, Dajarra, Camooweal, Julia Creek and Cloncurry. This gave students a better understanding of the region as a whole and different sector's roles within community allied health care. When looking at workforce development, this model also allows NWRH and the CRRH to showcase the services available for employment after graduation within the North West region. NWRH have successfully recruited three students from JCU that experienced NWRH outreach service delivery within their Mount Isa student placement.

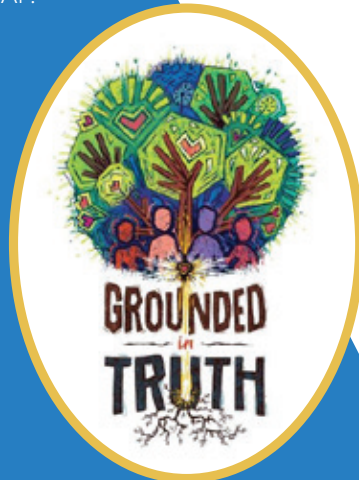
# RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

## OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

In order for NWRH to achieve its vision of 'Healthier People in Remote, Rural and Regional Communities', we recognise the fundamental need to commit to leading reconciliation throughout both the Company and the communities served.

We seek to achieve this vision through our purpose to collaborate, facilitate and connect rural, regional and remote health services to meet local needs. We demonstrate our commitment to reconciliation in Australia having completed our inaugural Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) in 2015; now building on these achievements and adapting to environmental changes to develop this Innovate RAP.

**Our ultimate goal for reconciliation is to ensure all staff and the Company understands what reconciliation really means so that stronger relationships can be built in communities, and service provision can be led based upon inclusion and access.**



NWRH is dedicated to aligning with the five dimensions which are measured through Reconciliation Australia and are required to achieve reconciliation in Australia through Respect, Relationships & Opportunities:

**Specifically, we will know Australia is reconciled when, and only when:**

- 1** Positive two-way relationships built on trust and respect exist between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non Indigenous Australians throughout society.
- 2** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians participate equally and equitably in all areas of life—i.e. we have closed the gaps in life outcomes—and the distinctive individual and collective rights and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples are universally recognised and respected, i.e. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are self-determining.
- 3** Our political, business and community institutions actively support all dimensions of reconciliation.
- 4** Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and rights are a valued and recognised part of a shared national identity and, as a result, there is national unity.
- 5** There is widespread acceptance of our nation's history and agreement that the wrongs of the past will never be repeated—i.e. there is truth, justice, healing and historical acceptance.





# FINANCIAL OVERVIEW



NWRH operational income for the 2018 -19 financial year increased by 13% on prior year activities. Included in this increase was much needed Capital infrastructure projects for accommodation in Doomadgee and Normanton for our Residential Aged Care Facilities. The Doomadgee project was completed by June 2019 with Normanton as stage 2 expected to be completed by 30 June 2020.

Overall for the 2018-19 financial year, NWRH recorded a loss from ordinary activities totalling \$14,902. This is compared to the prior year loss of \$584,522.

NWRH balance sheet remains in a strong financial position supported by its net current asset position of \$3.1m.

A copy of the full financial report and auditors report has been provided to the members and all relevant funding organisations.

## GOVERNANCE

NWRH is overseen by a Board of seven highly qualified Non – Executive Directors who have experience in all aspects of corporate governance and health. Meeting monthly, the Board and Board Sub-Committees together ensure strong governance and oversight of all elements of operations.

**NWRH Directors and their respective committee representations are as follows:**



**DEBRA BURDEN**

BBus FAICD FAIM.  
Deputy Board Chair  
and Chair of the Audit  
and Risk Committee



**ANNIE CLARKE**

MAICD. Member  
of Clinical Clinical  
Governance  
Committee and  
Cultural Competency  
and Stakeholder  
Engagement Committee



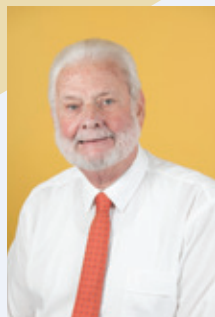
**PHIL BARWICK**

GAICD. Chair



**EDWARD FEWINGS**

MAICD. Co-Chair  
Cultural Competency  
and Stakeholder  
Engagement  
Committee



**HON. MIKE REYNOLDS**

CBE, AM, BSW,  
MAICD. Co-Chair  
Cultural Competency  
and Stakeholder  
Engagement Committee  
and Member of  
the Audit and Risk  
Committee



**DR ROBERT STABLE**

AM, M.B.B.S (Qld), D  
Univ (QUT), MHP (NSW),  
FRACGP, FAICD.  
Member of the Clinical  
Governance Committee



**SANDRA GLAISTER**

MBA – Master Dispute  
Resolution, B. Education  
(Nursing), Grad Cert  
Research Methods, Grad  
Cert Rural leadership,  
RCNT, RN, TAE, JP  
(Qual). Chair of the  
Clinical Governance  
Committee

## NWRH ACKNOWLEDGES THE FOLLOWING FUNDERS:

- Australian Government Department of Health
- Australian Government Department of Social Services
- Australian Government Department of the Prime Minister & Cabinet
- General Practice Queensland Ltd Trading as CHECKUP
- Mt Isa Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service Limited Trading as Gidgee Healing
- National Disability Insurance Agency
- Northern Queensland Primary Health Network
- Queensland Government Department of Communities, Child Safety & Disability Services
- RHealth
- Western Queensland Primary Health Care Network



# NWRH

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