



How our dietitians Stephanie and Emily embrace professional development

Mount Isa and Longreach

Our multidisciplinary teams travel to rural and remote communities across Queensland to treat a range of health concerns. This variety allows our team members to collaborate, support clients more effectively and learn from one another's viewpoints.

Stephanie from our Mount Isa team and Emily from our Longreach team both joined NWRH as graduate dietitians, moving to rural Queensland to live and serve our local communities.

"I've always had a passion for Aboriginal health," said Stephanie. "I was attracted to NWRH because of the travel, outreach, and clientele. The rates of chronic diseases are much higher out here, but I enjoy making a difference in the lives of people with diabetes and heart disease. I feel like I gain more from this work than I would in a city clinic because of the wide spectrum and complexity of the conditions I see."

Responsibilities as a dietitian in rural Queensland can vary enormously. Stephanie and Emily, along with the other health practitioners in their teams, treat the full spectrum of our clients' health needs.

"I visit between two and three towns every week, and we can often go to multiple towns in one visit," said Emily. "We all work well together in a multidisciplinary team. It doesn't matter that our work is different; if we have shared clients then we have a shared goal. We communicate about what each



of us worked on and what is relevant to each other's sessions. That high level of continuity of care is hugely beneficial for clients."

Stephanie and Emily both have a lot to look forward to at NWRH. Stephanie is working towards completing her Graduate Certificate in Health Promotion. "My goal is to embrace a more proactive, rather than reactive, approach to health."

NWRH provides professional development leave for our team members to continue learning and growing as health professionals.

Emily has also taken advantage of the opportunities for professional growth. "I like that I'm continually developing my skillset. We go into communities as the only provider of services – there are no specialty clinics. NWRH support us in developing our skills, as we're often the only healthcare professionals the communities have access to."

At NWRH, our teams work closely together to provide holistic treatment, and we pride ourselves on our supportive team environment. Emily said of the Longreach team: "We have the best team environment. People from other sites all comment on how fun it is here, and how well we work together. It's such a nice environment to come to, and we're all supported to do our best work."

Of course, there are challenges to working in remote communities. We encourage and empower our staff to work autonomously, as well as in teams. "There isn't always a senior allied health professional in my discipline immediately available," said Stephanie, "so it's important to be confident in your scope of practice. Knowing when to refer out and when to rely on your skill set is critical."

Both Mount Isa and Longreach are small towns, but our dietitians are never short on things to do outside of work. In terms of the social life in Longreach, Emily said, "It's a misconception that there's nothing to do in small towns. I do more here than I did when I was studying in Brisbane. People often come here not knowing anyone, but it's easier to make connections and friendships than in the city. We all have a shared experience and a strong sense of community here. It's really special."

Stephanie is a fan of exploring nature and participating in community events. "We have a lake and a lot of beautiful attractions such as waterhole and old mine sites visit around Mount Isa, so there's always lots to do. I'm getting to experience more and more community events, like rodeos, races, camp drafts, and fishing competitions."

Emily and Stephanie are both passionate about helping clients and making a meaningful impact on rural communities through holistic healthcare. They are looking forward to continuing to explore professional development opportunities at NWRH, growing in their careers and embracing the lifestyle in rural Queensland.