



# ANNUAL REPORT

2020 - 2021



Phil  
Barwick

CHAIRMAN, NWRH

## MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAIR

North and West Remote Health Ltd has once again remained very proactive in the primary health care arena, and this 2020/2021 year has produced increasing work in a range of clinical, wellbeing and support deliveries across Northern and Western Queensland.

The Board and Executive Team refocused our delivery strategy during the year and tightened our objectives which has highlighted our solid and continuing capacities to reach residents in supporting their health needs in regional, rural, and remote areas.

These strategies have consolidated and expanded our allied health services and also increased our delivery substantially in the mental health space and in allied health services to clients of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Another part of our refocussing was, after five years of quality services, to move out of residential aged care facilities in the Lower Gulf of Carpentaria and concentrate our energies and efforts towards our unique brand of mobile and flexible services to people in that area who are home based and living with chronic illness and disability. The facilities were proudly relinquished after a six-month transition period on 31st December 2020 to new providers who are likeminded in providing quality and culturally safe aged care services to the facility residents.

The Board has had changes in its directorship through the year with the departure of Debra Burden, our longstanding vice chair during November 2020. Debra was with NWRH from inception of the company in 2012 and was also the chair of our Financial, Audit and Risk Board committee. She has overseen and contributed to the stable financial position that the company finds itself in, and she endowed us with diligent and professional work on

many strategic objectives during her time with us. I sincerely thank Debra for her time with the Board.

Towards the end of the period, we have welcomed Kylie Doyle as a director to the Board, and she is proving a valuable contributor to the NWRH Ltd agenda.

The formal appointment of John Cain as CEO of the company was also a great result after he accepted the role in January 2021 following a period of acting CEO in 2020. John has worked very hard with great support from Jeremy Palmer and the management team to achieving the great results highlighted throughout this report. On behalf of the Board, I congratulate the Executive Management Team, and our entire staff line-up sincerely, and in particular, for meeting the company objectives in such a difficult and potentially hazardous year under the paralysing umbrella of the pandemic.

In providing our annual report for 2020/2021, I would like to mention the solid support, planning and guidance provided to us by our partners and stakeholders in ensuring our services reach the people who most need them. In closing, I would like to thank specifically the Primary Health Networks, the WQPHN and the NQPHN and the Federal Department of Health, and the National Indigenous Agency Australia as well as the many other Allied Health, Indigenous Health, and Mental Health organisations we work so closely with.



*John Cain*

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

## MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO

NWRH has continued to strive towards service delivery excellence throughout our large and diverse operations in Queensland. Our staff have throughout the year continued their momentum in providing access to services in our communities and it is a credit and privilege to see the wonderful work that you all do each day.

Regional, rural and remote primary health care services are the essence of why we exist and have continued in service delivery for over 25 years. On behalf of the Board of Directors, we thank you for your dedication and commitment to our clients and communities.

The year however has not been without its challenges. We continue to strive forward and support our clients, our communities and each other throughout the continuing COVID pandemic. NWRH as an essential service and through the work undertaken by all staff, continued uninterrupted service delivery and engagement with communities, clients, and funders. We were recognised throughout the year as a reliable and committed service achieving our funded targets despite COVID. This would not have been achievable without the diligence and hard work by our staff.

A testament to the year was our recognition as finalists in two Categories for the Queensland Mental Health achievement awards in Brisbane on the 15th October.

The awards were hosted by Open Minds Australia and the two finalist categories nominated were: Not for Profit *Workplace Award - Large (201+ Staff)* and the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Award*.

It was an honour to be at the awards on behalf of our staff and very proud of our two category finalist positions and even though we didn't take home an award, the experience was priceless and a testament to NWRH's journey and recognition of our services.

We assisted in the successful transition of three residential aged care services in the Lower Gulf to a new provider on the 31 December 2020 ending our five-year contract with the Department of Health. We are very proud of our achievements over these years and throughout the six-month transition period. We remain committed in the Lower Gulf communities supporting the community in Home Care, Mental Health and Wellbeing services and continuing our focus on our unique brand of mobile and flexible services to our communities in the Lower Gulf.

Our partnerships with funders, our communities and our stakeholders underpin all the services we provide and once again I would like to thank you for your continued support and commitment to the provision of regional, remote and very remote primary health care services. As always, we look forward to working and supporting you throughout this next financial year and improving access and the wellbeing of our people and communities in which we serve.

On behalf of the staff of NWRH I would like to take this opportunity to thank the Board of Directors and our leadership team for all their work and dedication to NWRH and look forward to working with you all during 2021-22. The following pages of this Annual Report highlight and summarise the great work we have achieved across all aspects of NWRH and the continued passion for the work we do in our communities. I look forward to being a part of this journey into the future.



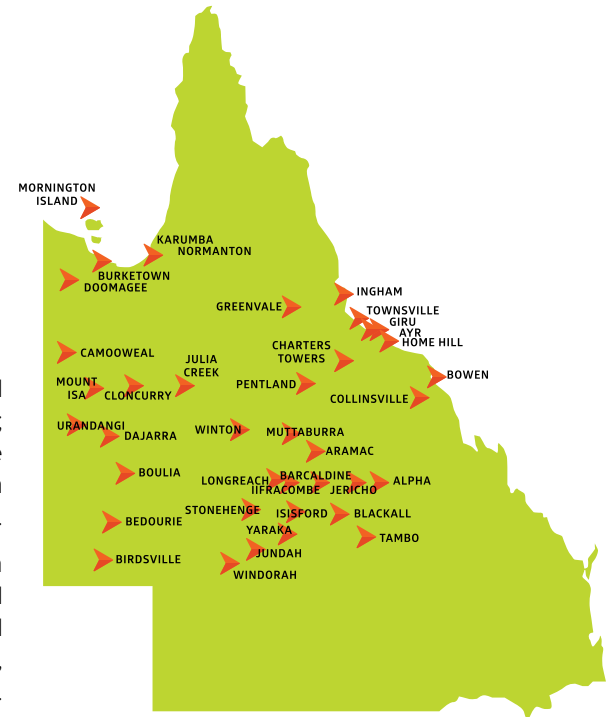
## ABOUT US

A vibrant, not-for-profit provider of community and outreach based allied health, community 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 established in 1993; to the present form as a large company that has grown in both size and scope.

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





AS/NZS ISO 9001:2015  
QUALITY CERTIFIED  
ORGANISATION

## OUR COMMITMENT TO QUALITY

**NWRH's commitment to Quality continues to be the cornerstone of our activities and the passion and dedication of our staff emphasises this through our delivery of quality services.**

As well as external audits, NWRH conduct regular internal audits across all our programs to ensure objectives are being met.

NWRH has been actively reviewing our practices and processes to align with the NDIS Practice Standards and recently completed our Stage One (1) and Two (2) Audit and have been approved as a registered NDIS Provider.

During the 2020-2021 Financial year, NWRH focussed on the following:

1

Practices and processes to align with the NDIS Practice Standards

2

Second Surveillance Audit as part of completing the second cycle of accreditation against ISO 9001:2015 (Quality Management System) Standards

3

Restructure of our Risk Management Framework and Incident Reporting processes to improve efficiencies

# 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 Committees together ensure strong governance and oversight of all elements of operations.

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



**ANNIE CLARKE**

MAICD. NWRH Vice Chair and Member of the Clinical Governance Committee, Cultural Competency & Stakeholder Engagement Committee, Audit & Risk Committee, Nominations Committee and Remunerations Committee



**EDWARD FEWINGS**

MAICD. ADip Community Welfare, Cert Gov Not-for-profits. NWRH Director and Co-Chair Cultural Competency and Stakeholder Engagement Committee



**PHIL BARWICK**

GAICD. GDipMan, GCertIE. NWRH Chair



**HON. MIKE REYNOLDS**

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



**EMERITUS PROFESSOR ROBERT STABLE**

AM, MBBS (Qld), D Univ (QUT), MHP (NSW), FRACGP, FAICD. NWRH Director, and Member of the Clinical Governance Committee



**SANDRA GLAISTER**

RN, MBus Admin, MDispute Resolution, BEdu (Nursing), GCert Research Methods, GCert Rural Leadership, Cert Clinical Teaching, CertIV Training and Assessment, JP (Qual), GAICD. NWRH Director and Chair of the Clinical Governance Committee and Member Audit & Risk Committee.



**KYLIE DOYLE**

CPA, GAICD. NWRH Director.

Appointed to the Board April 2021.

## NWRH PRINCIPLES



1

*People own their own health*



2

*Communities control their own health services where possible*



3

*Staff are employed locally (where possible), and assisted to build their skills and capabilities*



4

*Flexibility and responsiveness are possible because staff live where they work*

## NWRH PURPOSE

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

## CULTURAL COMPETENCY AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS



*“Mariakarti nyawa kurranyu nyinama” –  
“Look Back if we want to go forward”  
(Kukatja Language from my Walmajarri  
people in the Tanami Desert”*

*A year has past with its many challenges, NWRH showcase their innovation, commitment and dedication completing the NWRH Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan.*

*NWRH are now working on their next reconciliation journey - Stretch Action Plan.*



***“NWRH would respectfully like to acknowledge  
all traditional Owners, Ancestors, Elders and  
Leaders past, present and emerging as First  
Nations peoples of the lands across which we  
deliver all our services”***



## INNOVATE RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

### **NWRH Achievement for Reconciliation:**

Just as seasons change, we at NWRH must be prepared to change with the seasons. One of the major concerns during the timeframe of our RAP which has been challenging due to its nature has been the impact of the pandemic known as COVID, however NWRH has excelled once again and proven its ability to maintain the capabilities and capacity to adapt to change.

Since the launch of the Innovate RAP in 2019 in the rural community of Normanton situated in the Gulf of Carpentaria Queensland, there has been several trials and tribulations over the past two years to incorporate the strategies of NWRH Innovate RAP. NWRH has been around far too long to allow a pandemic to become an obstacle and to ensure we maintain our integrity through relationships, respect, and opportunities.

NWRH's vision of healthier people in remote, rural, and regional communities remains the core foundation of building integrity and

respect for people throughout the Central, Western, Gulf of Carpentaria and North Queensland communities.

There has been many accomplishments and achievements of the NWRH Innovate RAP with the five dimensions: Race Relations, Equality & Equity, Unity, Institutional Integrity and Historical Acceptance incorporated in the activities to ensure we align with many organisations and communities to measure reconciliation across Australia.

- Acknowledgement & Respect of First Nations People and their lands and seas
- Connecting staff to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander significant calendar dates and events and guest speakers
- Key collaborations with Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples, organisations, and communities within our service footprint regions
- Retention of local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce in remote and rural communities

- Cross Cultural Induction training for all staff
- Governance, supporting community participation, problem and solutions that are community orientated, supporting self-determination
- Sponsorship of local Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander events

Achieving many of the key milestones has only happened with the great support of the Cultural Competency & Stakeholder Engagement (CCSE) and the Board and staff of NWRH.

As we enter a new year, we look forward to the development of a new Reconciliation Action Plan with new milestones to journey and enjoy the next adventure along the Reconciliation Path.

Youni Yinda Thulgurrie – (Thank You Everybody)

# CENTRAL INTAKE

Central Intake is an integral part of NWRH, which has grown from strength to strength during the year. Since taking on the CADS (Community Aged and Disability Services) referrals in January 2021 the team now receives and processes all incoming referrals for all locations and disciplines. With the ever-growing clinical team across all our office locations, many processes have had to evolve to ensure the consistency in our referral management processes and scheduling.

The Central Intake Team's main objective is referral management for all geographical areas in which NWRH operates.

During 2020-21 Central Intake achieved the following:

## TOTAL NUMBER OF REFERRALS PROCESSED IN 2020-2021

# 9,162

which is an **increase** of **5%** from the previous year, with our March total breaking **1000** referrals for the month.

## OF THAT 9162 REFERRALS RECEIVED:



WERE FROM NORTH  
WEST REGION



WERE FROM EAST  
COAST REGION



WERE FROM CENTRAL  
WEST REGION



WERE FROM THE  
LOWER GULF REGION

## The key disciplines growth areas have been:

- Occupational Therapy and Speech Pathology with the commencement of our new NDIS ECEI (Early Childhood Early intervention) in the East coast both these disciplines have increase, OT by 42% and Speech by 37%
- CADS (Community Aged and Disability Services) referrals increased by 97% since the inception of referral management.
- Other disciplines that have had an increase in referrals are Continence by 44%, Mental Health by 18% and Physiotherapy by 8%.

As a result of the increase of referrals across all disciplines and an increase in the number of clinical staff, Central Intake will expand our team to ensure all forecast goals are met.



# ALLIED HEALTH SERVICES

The 20-21 financial year proved to be a productive year for the Allied Health team.

ACROSS ALL OUR PROGRAMS THE TEAM PROVIDED

29,350

OCCASIONS OF SERVICE FOR THE YEAR,  
this is 1,700 OOS more than 19-20 year.

Across all three sites our teams experienced growth with additional positions for **Occupational Therapy**, **Women's Health Physiotherapy**, **Speech Pathology** and **Podiatry**. This has enabled our teams to deliver and provide more access to services into the 35 communities we visit.

Our clinicians travelled great distances- **300,000km** to deliver these services to people in the most rural and remote areas of Queensland.

A large focus of the 20-21 financial year was improving staff retention and rolling out the new graduate program.

This program aims to support our new graduate workforce by gradually exposing them to their caseload and ensuring access to structured senior support. NWRH aims to be an employer of choice for rural and remote allied health service delivery.

**Our Allied Health team provide client centred care where by people own their own health.**



## SERVICES DELIVERED

BY OUR ALLIED HEALTH TEAMS ARE:

- Aboriginal Health
- Occupational Therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Podiatry
- Exercise Physiology
- Speech Pathology
- Diabetes Education
- Continence Advice
- Dementia Advice
- Dietetics

## MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Team is made up of a full spectrum of mental health and support workers to provide services across the Stepped Care continuum. Our team of 35 staff (and growing quickly), includes Mental Health Nurses, Psychologists, Provisional Psychologists, Social Workers, Mental Health Accredited Social Workers, Cultural Liaison Support, Wellbeing Clinicians (providing social and emotional supports), Social Work students and Clinical Psychology students.

The NWRH Mental Health and Wellbeing portfolio provides services across the continuum of the Stepped Care Model of service delivery, in line with the National Mental Health Reforms including low intensity, early intervention, prevention and case management programs, through to high intensity, long term mental health nursing support.

# 15,160

**SESSIONS**  
WERE DELIVERED

BY THE MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLBEING TEAM TO:



## 2294

INDIVIDUAL CLIENTS



## 13%

OF ALL SESSIONS (1925)  
WERE DELIVERED VIA  
**TELEHEALTH**

Our services have extended their reach this year, including services to **Bowen, Collinsville** and **Longreach**. This is in addition to the communities that we regularly provide support and services to including:

Doomadgee, Burketown, Mornington Island, Normanton and Karumba, Mount Isa, Camooweal, Cloncurry, Julia Creek, Hughenden, Richmond, Townsville, Charters Towers, Pentland, Georgetown, Croydon, Einsleigh, Forsayth, Mt Surprise, Greenvale, Ingham, Cardwell, Ayr, Home Hill.

With so many communities to visit, you can imagine that we clock up some serious air and travel time. To deliver the services our staff **drove** for more than **146,392 kilometers** by car and took over **388 flights**.

**The mental health and wellbeing team have also begun new programs in the last year. Supporting carers, delivering additional NDIS services and disability support, and supporting residents of aged care homes has provided each community with a rich suite of services that people can access.**

We continue to deliver ongoing supports in the following programs:

**The Mental Health Integrated Complex Care Program** – providing Mental Health Nursing Services to people with complex mental health needs in the Townsville and surrounding areas.

**Psychological Therapies** – Psychologists, Provisional Psychologists, Mental Health Social Workers, and other Mental Health Professionals provide sessions to people experiencing mild to moderate mental health concerns such as anxiety and depression. The reach of this service is extended to most locations via telehealth. Psychological therapies are provided across the lifespan with specific programs for school aged children and residents of aged care homes. Our staff undertake specific training to be able to deliver these services.

**Drug and Alcohol Treatment services** – in Doomadgee, NWRH delivers a tailored support and psychological treatment service to support people wanting to learn about or address the impacts of drug and alcohol.

**Recidivism and Transition Support** – extending this program in to 2021 – 2022, we are pleased to be able to provide an intensive support program to residents of Doomadgee and Mornington Island who require support with any matter related to the justice system. Our team have developed a case management support program that relies heavily on cultural and on-country activities to support people in the program.

**Family Mental Health Support** - an early intervention and prevention program providing practical supports, education and social and emotional support, the program works across the Mount Isa and Lower Gulf regions to support children, young people, and families.

**Carer Support** – Through the National Carer Gateway program, NWRH provides individual counselling, group peer support, carer coaching and in some areas respite to carers of people that are frail, aged, experiencing an illness or have a disability.



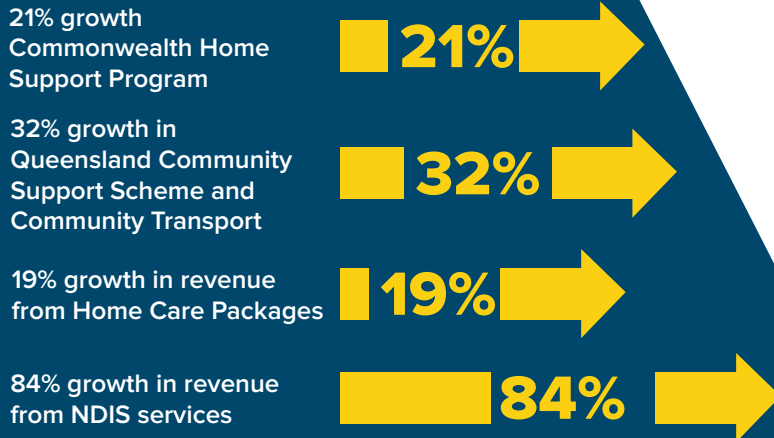
**Supporting local workforce continues to be a primary focus. Creating local employment, training and education opportunities in rural and remote areas is a key strategy. Through the local workforce approach, we have strengthened mental health services to the communities of Georgetown, Croydon, Doomadgee, Mornington Island and Normanton.**

# COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

During 2020/21 our Community, Aged and Disability Services team continued to 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 engage in a broad scope of activities more actively.

It was a year of **growth** despite significant changes in the service delivery environment with the impact of COVID and transition of Residential Aged Care Facilities to another provider. During 2020/2021 the Community, Aged and Disability Services delivered an improved annual performance against every program in the portfolio including:

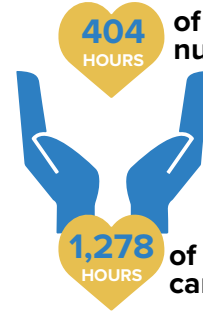


NWRH's presence in remote and very remote locations gives the opportunity for our clients to maintain living at home, retaining connections to their community, kin and country. NWRH services support people with disability to maximise their potential and participate as equal citizens in Australian society.

## During 2020/2021 NWRH provided Aged Care clients with



hours of group social support



of community nursing support



of personal care



hours of individual social support



Further, clients who require assistance to remain independent because of functional limitations received the following:

**2,054 hrs**  
of Core Support under NDIS

**596 hrs**  
of Support Coordination  
under NDIS

**2,029 hrs**  
of in-home and community  
access support through the  
Queensland Community  
Support Scheme



## What do our Clients think....

*"Thank you very much for sending out such a lovely and vibrant worker to sit with me while my wife goes out. She is welcome any time."*

*"What would I do without you? You make my life so much easier, thank you!"*

*"(NWRH) is the best thing to have come into our lives."*

*"That organisation (NWRH) is running on passion and everyone does a phenomenal job."*

*"The thoughtfulness and ongoing care make my days just a little easier."*

*"We wish to thank all of the North and West Remote Health Staff in Mount Isa for their consistency, kindness and time. I am greatly appreciative for every service and Care Support Worker that arrives each working day, and cannot emphasise enough how thankful I am for all the services I have in place."*

*"The thoughtfulness and ongoing care make my days just a little easier."*



#### **North West (Mount Isa)**

53 Enid Street  
Mount Isa Qld 4825  
Tel: 07 4744 7600

#### **Central West (Longreach)**

19 Duck Street  
Longreach Qld 4730  
Tel: 07 4652 7100

#### **Lower Gulf (Normanton)**

38 Dutton Street  
Normanton Qld 4890  
Tel: 07 4747 8800

#### **Corporate Office (Townsville)**

3/106 Dalrymple Service Road  
Currajong Qld 4812  
Tel: 07 4781 9300

[www.nwrh.com.au](http://www.nwrh.com.au)

NDIS Registration ID: 4-4331-498



## **NWRH WOULD LIKE TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE FOLLOWING FUNDERS AND STAKEHOLDERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT AND PARTNERSHIP**

- Northern Queensland Primary Health Network
- Western Queensland Primary Health Network
- Australian Government Department of Health
- Queensland Government Department of Communities, Child Safety & Disability Services
- General Practice Queensland Ltd Trading as CHECKUP
- Australian Government Department of Social Services
- National Indigenous Australians Agency
- Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS)
- Mount Isa Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Service Limited Trading as Gidgee Healing
- Neami
- Wellways
- Health Workforce Queensland
- North West Hospital and Health Service
- RHealth Limited, Central West Hospital and Health Service
- My Pathways and Bynoe Community Advancement Co-operative
- Mornington Island, Doomadgee and Normanton Councils
- Queensland Police Service
- National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA)