

2024 | ANNUAL
REPORT

Centacare
North Queensland
"Wellbeing For All"



Social
Services
Ministry of
the Catholic
Diocese of
Townsville





Most Rev Timothy J. Harris

Bishop of Townsville, Catholic Diocese
of Townsville

As we proudly celebrated 45 years of service in the Townsville and north-west region, Centacare NQ continues to build on the strong foundations established in 1979. This milestone marks not just the passage of time, but the evolution of our mission and ability to respond to the needs of the people and communities which we serve, with a focus on community safety, wellbeing, and support.

In line with our strategic intent, the year saw the organisation continue our commitment to service excellence. As part of our strategic plan (2023-2026), Centacare NQ worked diligently to enhance our service delivery by ensuring that, from first contact, every individual experiences a responsive and integrated approach. Our efforts this year prioritized not only efficiency but also the safety and wellbeing of those who rely on us.

Looking forward, we remain focused on advancing our vision of a future where our services continue to enrich lives, enhance safety, and promote wellbeing across the Townsville and north-west region. Over the 2025-2026 period, Centacare NQ will transition to an incorporated entity. This next chapter for the organisation will help galvanise our future whilst preserving history and enduring connection to the mission and social services ministry of the Catholic Diocese of Townsville.

On behalf of the Diocese, I thank all those who have helped deliver the mission over the last 45 years to the present day. I thank the present Executive Director of Centacare NQ for her leadership and for the collaboration of her team. So much has been achieved and so much more needs to be done.

May Centacare NQ continue to make a difference in our community.

MOST REV TIMOTHY J HARRIS
Bishop of Townsville



Paula Washington

Executive Director,
Centacare NQ

Many services, One vision

Centacare NQ, over its 45 years of service has grown and evolved, developing services over time to continue our commitment to responding to the needs of people in our region. Over this time, our commitment to the vision of valued-based services that promote wellbeing of all remains.

Strengthened by Strategy and Mission

Guided by the mission of the Catholic diocese and our strategic plan, Centacare NQ has continued to strive for service excellence that is underpinned by a strong values base and priority for the safety, wellbeing and dignity of all.

Integrity

*Compassion
Equality*

*Respect
Stewardship*

Dignity

These values are embedded in every aspect of our work.
They are visible in the following ways:

Growth Through Connection

The growth and expansion of our services and capabilities are a testament to the commitment of our team and our culture of continuous improvement. By fostering deeper connections within the communities we serve, our services have grown in their accessibility, cultural capability and responsiveness to current and emerging community need. Our intention is that people feel supported, valued, and genuinely cared for at every stage of their journey. Our community, through feedback, has told us that we are achieving this goal.

Looking to the Future

As we look ahead, our focus remains on delivering on our vision of 'Wellbeing for All' through our client services as well as our diverse range of community training and initiatives such as professional education and development services, and positive, proactive community events such as the Big Blue Table and School Savvy.

A major development in the year ahead will be Centacare NQ's transition to an incorporated entity. This strategic step will strengthen our governance, enhance organisational sustainability, and position us to further our mission with clarity and confidence and build upon our longstanding commitment and connection to the social services ministry of the Catholic Diocese of Townsville.

An enduring Commitment

With deep gratitude for all who have contributed to Centacare NQ over the past 45 years, we hope to honour and build upon this legacy in the coming year. The contribution of Staff, community, our Council and the Church is integral to Centacare NQ's future as it was in our past and I extend my sincerest gratitude to all who have been part of our journey.

Centacare NQ will continue to serve our community with heart, purpose and dedication

PAULA WASHINGTON
Centacare NQ | Executive Director

MANY SERVICES, ONE VISION

At Centacare NQ, our work is as diverse as the communities we serve. From mental health support to family and relationship services, from aged care to youth and disability programs—our services span generations, cultures, and circumstances. But no matter the program or the person, every connection is guided by a single, unwavering commitment:

“Wellbeing for All”

One Vision, Many Pathways

Each year, thousands of individuals walk through our doors, connect with our team, or receive support in their own homes or communities. Behind every service is a person with a story—and behind every story is our shared vision. Whether we are helping someone rebuild after a crisis, supporting a young person to feel safe and heard, or standing beside an elder navigating life transitions, our goal remains the same: to help every individual feel seen, supported, and empowered to thrive.



A Whole-of-Community Approach

“Wellbeing” is more than the absence of vulnerability. It is about connection, belonging, purpose, and dignity. It is the freedom to access what you need, when you need it, in a way that respects your culture, your story, and your goals. We recognise that no single service can achieve this alone. Centacare NQ champions a collaborative, person-centred approach, where wraparound care is not just an aspiration, but a reality.

Across our many services, we strive to remove silos, and walk alongside individuals and families in a way that reflects our core values:

Integrity, Compassion, Respect, Dignity, Equality and Stewardship

Wellbeing is everyone's right

As we look ahead, our focus remains clear. In every program we deliver and every relationship we nurture, “Wellbeing for all” will continue to shape not just what we do—but who we are.

2024 | QUICK STATS

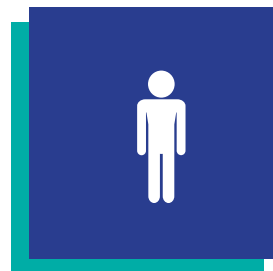
Who did we support this year



4378
CLIENTS
SUPPORTED



58%
FEMALE



42%
MALE



29%
ABORIGINAL OR
TORRES STRAIT
ISLANDER



4%
CULTURALLY AND
LINGUISTICALLY
DIVERSE



2024 | QUICK STATS



57,000 hours
CLIENT CONTACT
WORK



90,000 hours
CLIENT WORK



56,000
SESSIONS



25+
PROFESSIONAL
DEVELOPMENT
EVENTS OFFERED TO
COMMUNITY



10+
COMMUNITY IMPACT
EVENTS

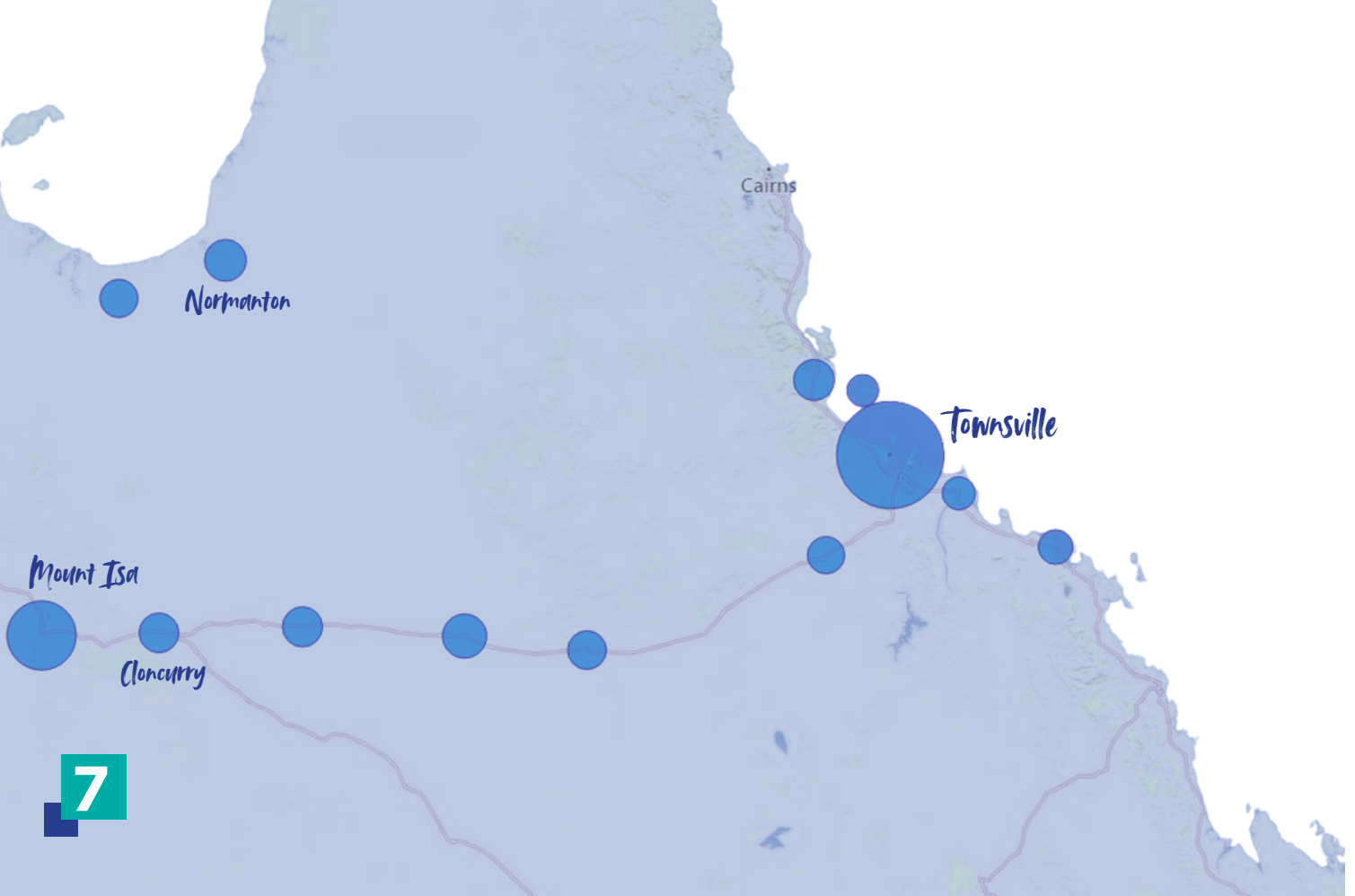


800+
CHILDREN
SUPPORTED THROUGH
SCHOOL SAVVY

2024 | OUR IMPACT

In 2024, Centacare NQ made a tangible difference in the lives of individuals and families across Northern Queensland. From Townsville to Mount Isa, Burdekin and through outreach in remote and regional communities like Normanton, our teams delivered compassionate, inclusive, and practical support where it was needed most. Whether it was counselling, family and relationship services, youth programs, mental health support, or aged care assistance, our work reflected the unique strengths and needs of each local community. By embedding ourselves in these diverse regions, we strengthened our commitment to ensuring that wellbeing is not defined by postcode—but by access, dignity, and connection.

Townsville | Bowen | Normanton | Mount Isa | Cloncurry | Ingham | Charters Towers | Palm Island | Hughenden | Richmond | Julia Creek



2024 OUR IMPACT

Hear from the people we've supported

Clients described their workers as “amazing” and “awesome,” expressing deep appreciation for the support they received. Clients shared that they felt heard and supported during times of stress, with one noting:

“They respect me. I was worried about my finances and was so stressed but they helped work things out.”



ROSA client advised their case was being closed and wanted to say:

“a big thank you to a staff member for all the support received, I am really grateful for her support and the family is doing well”

Bridge workers interventions and work done with a client has:

“turned my families life around”

and that she herself is now working in the field to help others.



Clients consistently reported that staff listened to their needs and worked with them to ensure that the choices they made were supported and respected, highlighting our commitment to service excellence.

2024 |

OUR RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

The Vision for Centacare North Queensland is 'Wellbeing for all'. This is our commitment to action. We believe that our business and organisational vision and core values of Compassion and Respect can only be achieved through an understanding of the multigenerational trauma that First Nations peoples have endured, and informed by truth-telling and guidance that we can progress reconciliation. To this end we will remain informed through subscribing to the Community Truth-telling Pathways program of Reconciliation Australia.

Our Mission is centred upon 'enhancing wellbeing and resilience through respect, dignity and service excellence'. We are committed to Equality, inclusion and collaboration in all areas of our work across North Queensland.

We recognise that true reconciliation is about acknowledging the past and ensuring practices of Centacare NQ remain committed to unity across all aspects of the organisation. Everyone's voice is important, we must learn from Elders and support a bottom-up approach focused on togetherness in our community and ensuring emerging future leaders can thrive. This includes the voices of those who are recipients of services offered by Centacare NQ as these voices and experience continue to shape socially just outcomes for First Nations peoples.

[Read our 24-26 Reconciliation Action Plan](#)



2024 | OUR EVENTS

Big Blue Table

In 2024, Centacare NQ proudly hosted our third Big Blue Table event as part of Mental Health Week, bringing our community together to spark conversations about mental wellbeing - the theme this year being 'valuing workplace wellness'. Staff, and partners gathered to share food, stories, and support—raising awareness, reducing stigma, and reinforcing that no one has to face mental health challenges alone. It was a powerful reminder that sometimes, the most meaningful change starts with a simple conversation around the table.



**We had 104 in attendance -
Our biggest breakfast yet!**



School Savvy

In 2024, our School Savvy initiative made a significant impact in helping local families prepare for the school year. We proudly supported over 350 families with access to affordable, good-quality back-to-school supplies and uniforms, ensuring children could return to the classroom equipped and confident. Recognising the increasing financial strain faced by many households, School Savvy aims to ease the burden and promote educational equality for all students—regardless of background or circumstance.

A special thank you goes to Orange Sky, who played a vital role in this year's campaign by generously cleaning all donated second-hand uniforms. Their support meant that every item was fresh, clean, and ready to be worn with pride. This initiative continues to be a powerful example of what can be achieved through community collaboration, kindness, and a shared commitment to creating opportunities for young people to thrive.



**Over 350 families supported
with back to school supplies
and uniforms in 2024**



2024 | OUR TRAINING

Mental Health First Aid



Our Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) training empowers individuals with the knowledge and skills to recognise the signs of mental health challenges and respond with confidence, care, and appropriate support. Through this evidence-based training, participants learn how to assist someone who may be experiencing a mental health problem or crisis, including how to connect them with the right professional help. By delivering MHFA across workplaces, community groups, and organisations, we're helping to break down stigma, build safer and more supportive environments, and promote early intervention—because mental health is just as important as physical health.

We delivered 8 Mental Health First Aid training sessions across our footprint in 2024!



**MENTAL
HEALTH
FIRST AID**
Australia

Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST)

Our Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST) is a vital program that equips participants with practical tools to recognise when someone may be at risk of suicide and how to respond with compassion, confidence, and safety. Delivered by trained facilitators, ASIST is an evidence-based, two-day workshop designed to build life-saving intervention skills for use in both professional and everyday settings. By providing this training to community members, service providers, and workplaces, we're fostering a more informed, responsive, and supportive community—one where people feel empowered to reach out, listen without judgment, and help connect those in crisis to the support they need. We delivered 2 ASIST training sessions in 2024.



30+ community members trained in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills across our footprint in 2024!

See all of our upcoming training on our Facebook [here](#)



2024 | SPOTLIGHT ON FRC

Family Relationships Centre (FRC)

The Family Relationship Centre (FRC) is a welcoming and supportive service that helps families strengthen relationships, navigate separation, and put children's wellbeing first. We offer confidential support, mediation, and practical guidance to assist families in managing complex issues such as parenting arrangements, communication challenges, and conflict resolution.

Our skilled practitioners work alongside individuals, couples, and families to explore options, reduce stress, and build positive pathways forward. At the heart of the FRC is a commitment to fostering respectful relationships and helping families thrive—no matter what stage of life they are in.



**120+ families supported
at our FRC in 2024!**



Eligibility to access service:

You do not need a referral to access the Family Relationship Centre. Self referrals are accepted.

Cost:

Family Dispute Resolution is subsidised through the Department of Social Services. Intake and assessment appointments are at no cost. For clients who have an income under \$50,000 – the first three hours of joint Family Dispute Resolution Sessions are free. For clients earning over \$50,000 – the first hour of Family Dispute Resolution is free with fees incurred for hours thereafter per person.

2024 | SPOTLIGHT ON EAP



Counselling support was provided to **200** employees of organisations who choose Centacare NQ as their Employee Assistance Provider.

Centacare NQ welcomes contact by business' and organisations to explore our Employee Assistance Program benefits.

Get in touch with us to learn more!

Centacare NQ - Employee Assistance Program (EAP)

Centacare NQ's Employee Assistance Services have continued to support the local region this year. Our services have supported organisations and workplaces to build the professional skills of employees, a positive workplace culture and improved psycho-social wellbeing.

Services have included critical incident support, psychological first aid, counselling, professional skills development, practice supervision, nationally and internationally recognised training such as Mental Health First Aid and ASIST.



Counselling



Critical Incident Response



Mediation/
Dispute Resolution



Training,
Workshops and
Professional Development



Management
Coaching/
Manager Support



Reporting and
Outcomes
(Utilisation reports)



Extended
Service Hours

Centacare NQ's program is a member of the State and National ACCESS networks, operating in over forty sites Australia wide. ACCESS EAP Program is currently one of a handful of EAP providers in the Asia-Pacific region to have accreditation as a quality endorsed company.



2025

2024 | OUR SUPPORTERS AND SPONSORS

In 2024, we have been reminded time and again that the heart of Centacare NQ beats strongest because of the incredible people and organisations who walk alongside us. To our sponsors, donors, supporters, and community partners – thank you. Your generosity, trust, and commitment allow us to continue delivering essential services, creating positive change, and reaching those who need it most. As a not-for-profit, we simply could not do what we do without you. Every contribution – whether time, resources, funding, or advocacy – has made a tangible difference, and together we have built a stronger, more connected community.

Sponsors/Donors



Ross Valley Lions Club

For your support with our School Savvy initiative

Ausco Industries

For your support with our School Savvy initiative



NQ Gas Pipeline Grants Program

For your support with our School Savvy initiative

Anaconda

For your support with our Big Blue Table Event



NQ Cowboys

For your support with our Big Blue Table Event

Wally Wax

For your support with our Big Blue Table Event



Sea Link

For your support with our Big Blue Table Event

Nics Bics

For your support with our Big Blue Table Event



Unique Partnerships

For your support with our Big Blue Table Event



South32

For your support with our School Savvy initiative in Cloncurry

MMG Dugald River

For your support with our School Savvy initiative in Cloncurry



Supporters & Community Partners

Missy Moo's Coffee
0459 943 263

Missy Moos Café

For keeping our Townsville team caffeinated

Topsy Mola Consulting

For providing cultural training to our teams



A heartfelt thank you to all of our supporters and sponsors for making such an impact in 2024. We look forward to working with you again in

2025!

The background of the cover is a photograph of a large, colorful mural on a stone wall. The mural features a red section with white polka dots, a blue section with white handprints, and a yellow section with a black outline. The mural is set against a blue sky with white clouds. The top and bottom of the cover are decorated with large, abstract, wavy shapes in shades of blue and teal. A white circular graphic is centered over the mural, containing the Centacare logo and the title of the report.

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Centacare North Queensland acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the land on which we live and work, and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to their Elders, past, present, and emerging.

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