



# BALANCE

North West Hospital and Health Service

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WINTER EDITION



### Acknowledgement of traditional custodians

The North West Hospital and Health Service respectfully acknowledges the Elders past and present and the Traditional Owners of the land, sea and waterways which we service and declare the North West Hospital and Health Service's commitment to reducing inequalities between Indigenous and non-Indigenous health outcomes in line with the National Indigenous Reform Agreement (Closing the Gap).

### Acknowledgement of Australian South Sea Islanders

North West Hospital and Health Service formally recognises the Australian South Sea Islanders as a distinct cultural group within our geographical boundaries. The Northwest Hospital and Health Service is committed to fulfilling the Queensland Government Recognition Statement for Australian South Sea Islander Community to ensure that present and future generations of Australian South Sea Islanders have equality of opportunity to participate in and contribute to the economic, social, political and cultural life of the State

## Vision, Purpose, Values

### Our Vision

To lead the delivery of safe, sustainable healthcare in our unique region with our diverse partners and communities.

### Our Purpose

Partner with our communities to improve health outcomes by delivering valued, high-quality and sustainable health services that are close to home.

### Our Values

Our values will guide our decision making and actions as we commit to respecting, protecting, and promoting human rights in our decision making and actions. These values include Innovation, Respect, Engagement, Accountability, Caring, and Honesty.



This newsletter is produced by the North West Hospital and Health Service.

All feedback and contributions are welcome to [NWHHS\\_Communication@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:NWHHS_Communication@health.qld.gov.au).

All published material has been approved by the Health Service Chief Executive.





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# NWHHS Balance

## From the Board Chair Cheryl Vardon

Dear North West,

I am delighted to have taken up the role of Board Chair for the North West Hospital and Health Board in April of this year. It is a privilege to work closely with North West communities to improve and deliver high-quality healthcare across the region.

I have travelled to Mornington Island, Doomadgee, Karumba and Burketown as well as Mount Isa to meet with staff and community members in the company of Minister for Health and Ambulance

Services the Honourable Yvette D'Ath and the HHS Chief Executive Craig Carey. We heard, firsthand, the stories about the delivery of health services on the ground across the North West.

All Board Directors are underway with travel plans to visit our health centres to listen and take on board ideas for change and improvement as well as hearing about what is working well. We know that it is the effort of individuals, supported within their communities, which creates safe and high quality services and systems.

I am looking forward to crossing paths with many of you in the months to come as we keep in touch and work together to strive for excellence in healthcare across the region.

Regards,  
Cheryl





# NWHHS Balance

## From the Chief Executive Craig Carey

I am excited to share the first edition of the Balance magazine with you and provide insight into our health service across the north west region.

The North West HHS delivers health services to the communities of North West Queensland, serving a population of around 28,000 people across one regional hospital, two multi-purpose health services, three remote hospitals, four primary health clinics and five community health centres.



Mount Isa Hospital is the primary referral centre within the North West HHS. Patients from other facilities across the region who require specialist treatment and care are referred to either the Mount Isa Hospital or to other major hospitals within Queensland. North West HHS also utilises telehealth to enable patients and facilities to access specialist appointments and reviews. The North West HHS is committed to the people we serve and will take every opportunity to deliver on our strategic objectives.

- Provide high quality healthcare to all people of our region, as close to home as we can, so together we become healthier people.
- Working with partners, stakeholders and our communities to hear your voices and act on feedback, so together we form collaborative partnerships.
- Attracting, retaining and developing our workforce, to value all the staff who call our region home, so we build a more resilient workforce.
- Making the best use of our resources, delivering effective and efficient healthcare for North West Queensland, so we have sustainable resources.

I hope this publication gives you insight into our health service and how together we can continue to serve our communities and provide high-quality health care.

Regards,  
Craig

NWHHS Balance

Community



Family Advocacy Unit

partners with PCYC

to help local family

***The Family Advocacy Unit at Mount Isa Hospital have partnered with PCYC to help out a local family with some much needed items.***

When local community member, Joanne moved into a new unit with her newborn baby, she did not have any furniture.

Together with PCYC, the Family Advocacy Unit were able to source and provide Joanne with a new cot as well as other essential items for her newborn.

# Helping our local community is what it is all about

Some of the items included a baby bath, toys, clothes and blankets.

Special Care Nursery Unit Manager Jo La Spina said it was a small gesture, but would make a big difference.

"Being able to support our local community is what is most important to us. We do our best to support our families while they are in our care in hospital, and sometimes they may need a little bit of extra help after they leave us," she said.

"I would like to express my gratitude to PCYC for sourcing the items and continuing to keep our community members at the forefront of everything they do."

Joanne's sister, Cassandra was able to accept the items on her behalf from Jo, as well as PCYC Acting Sergeant Aimee Sewell and Youth Workers Katelyn Wishart and Faye Tapu.



"

*"Being able to support our local community is what is most important to us."*



# Spreading the love

# at the Mount Isa Show

North West HHS staff recently joined in the fun at the Mount Isa Show. The show weekend was a popular event with the local community featuring rides, food trucks and a range of giveaways and resources from local organisations. North West HHS staff set up a stall at the show and had a great time meeting and mingling with the community.

The Hospital in the Home (HITH) team offered free health checks, including checking blood pressures. We also shared information about the Lead Alliance, COVID-19, channels of providing feedback to our health service and of course, had lots of giveaways. The red heart balloons could be seen across the event and was our small way of spreading the love with our community.





Staff

# Time to say goodbye after more than a decade of service

After more than a decade dedicated to the Cloncurry community, Dr Leonie Fromberg is saying goodbye to the north west. Dr Fromberg started her career in Cloncurry as a registrar, progressing to a senior medical officer and finishing as the medical superintendent, leaving a mark on the tight-knit community after providing healthcare for the last 11 years.

Dr Fromberg said the love for the job has kept her working rurally for so many years.

“My first shift at Cloncurry Hospital involved the insertion of a chest drain for a traumatic pneumothorax of an 18-year-old female and was the moment I knew I was exactly where I wanted to be,” she said.



**“The diversity of presentations, the ground crew I work with and the close working relationships with other medical and nursing staff has been incredible.”**

Dr Fromberg completed her five-year medical degree in five years and became a mother of two at the same time. Her eldest child was born at the end of her first year of studies and her second child was born seven days after her last exam.

“Getting through my medical degree and having two babies was a huge achievement. I was proud of myself as a mum punching holes in some glass ceilings and paving the way for others.”

Dr Fromberg encourages other medical students and interns considering working in remote medicine to go for it.

“The diversity of medicine is challenging and rewarding. At times it can be fatiguing, but you will learn so much and the people you will meet are wonderful.”

North West HHS wishes Dr Fromberg and her family all the best as they embark on a new journey in the southern regions of Western Australia where Dr Fromberg will work at Esperance Hospital, before settling in Mission Beach early next year.





# Mount Isa Cancer

# Unit hosts 'Even Bigger

# Morning Tea'

Thanks to the generous donations of staff and the local community, a spread of delicious sweet and savoury treats were recently available for a small donation directly supporting the Cancer Care Unit.

The morning tea is an annual tradition that has been running since 2014, although over the last two years was not able to be held due to COVID-19.



Staff enjoying the event together

*"It was wonderful to step back into a sense of tradition and normalcy here at the hospital, with smiles on faces and delicious food being shared together, all for a great cause."*

Cancer Care Nurse Unit  
Manager Nicole Williams





# Staff Spotlight

## Meet Tammy from Cloncurry Hospital

Tammy is the Admin Officer at the Cloncurry Hospital and has been working at the hospital for almost five years.

A colleague of Tammy's recently shared what a wonderful person she is both inside and outside of work. She said Tammy is a hard worker, reliable, very knowledgeable, and someone you can always count on.

Here at North West HHS, we are so fortunate to have staff like Tammy who go above and beyond in the workplace to ensure the smooth operation of day-to-day functions, an important part of ensuring our patients continue to be taken care of and receive a high level of care. Thank you for all that you do Tammy - you are an asset to the team in Cloncurry!

## Community Health



Lila, Clinical Nurse with  
Community Mental Health  
Services at Mount Isa Hospital

## Cancer Care



The Cancer Care Team - Marianne,  
Shannon, Chole and Nicole

## Dental students



Fifth year dental students on  
placement at the Mount Isa  
Hospital

## Normanton



Nurses smiling at Normanton  
Hospital - did you know  
Normanton has a population of  
around 1200 people?



# COVID-19 Update

## Be proactive and stay well as COVID-19, flu and tourists circulating

North West HHS is reminding the community to be proactive and stay well over the coming weeks as the flu, COVID-19 and tourists are circulating across the state. With many visitors passing through town and numbers expected to increase with the upcoming Mount Isa Mines Rodeo in August, it is important for the community to stay vigilant when it comes to their health and wellbeing.

The north west is a beautiful part of our country that attracts visitors from far and wide, especially during this time of year with major events like the rodeo coming up. We encourage the community to remain vigilant and stay hydrated and continue to eat a healthy balanced diet, wash hands and sanitise after being in outdoor spaces, wear a mask in crowded areas if you feel more comfortable and stay at home if you are sick.

# Do I need a booster if I've already had COVID-19?

If you've had COVID-19 once, you can get it again. Having a booster means you're far less likely to get severe disease should you get infected again.

Having this extra layer of protection can reduce your likelihood of reinfection, especially compared to those who haven't been vaccinated.

If you've recently had COVID-19, wait until you have recovered before getting a booster.

Visit your local GP or pharmacy to book in for your booster vaccination.



## Consumers



# Consumer Spotlight

**For more than 3 years, Pharmacist Tracy Lu has called the small “outback by the sea” town of Karumba home.**

She’s a member of the Community Advisory Group (CAG) for Karumba and regularly attends meetings where she shares her feedback and the feedback of her customers at the Pharmacy.

“I like to share feedback that I receive from the customers in the pharmacy and share what they would like to see in the community,” she said.

“My role here is different to what it would be as a pharmacist somewhere else – in this job I get to do a little bit more for the community.

It’s really important for the community to have the CAG – it’s a brilliant idea.”

Tracy said it gives the residents the opportunity to hear about what work is going on behind the scenes at the hospital and gives the town the opportunity to ask questions and make requests.

“It helps everyone to understand each other a lot better and it creates a better community. It makes people know that their voice is being heard and there is someone acting on that.”



# Would you like to join us as a consumer?



**Jasmine Barber**  
Manager Public Relations

***Consumers are people who use, or are potential users of healthcare services.***

They are members of the public, previous patients, carers, and anyone else interested about healthcare and services provided in their community.

Here in the North West, we have the opportunities for consumers to join consumer advisory groups, where you will meet approximately 4 times per year to discuss current health related issues in your community. They are the conduit between our community and our board.

We also have a pool of consumers who may be asked to review and give feedback on health brochures and publications, join

join health standard committees to provide a consumer perspective, and help to develop health plans and initiatives.

**Current consumer advisory groups:**

- Mount Isa & Camooweal
- Cloncurry
- Julia Creek
- Burketown
- Julia Creek
- Normanton

Doomadgee and Mornington Island have community led health councils, please contact us for information.



If you'd like to know more, please contact Manager Public Relations Jasmine Barber at [nwhhs.engagement@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:nwhhs.engagement@health.qld.gov.au)

### Consumers

# Burketown CAG represents community health in the north west

North West Qld Community Advisory Groups (CAGs) are locally based health groups comprised of community members, Burke Shire CEO, local health, police and school staff as well as broad range of health professionals and representatives from North West Hospital and Health Service(NWHHS) . We meet quarterly in Burketown in person and via Teams.

Local community members bring forward, to the wider group, issues – good and bad – that are affecting our community as well providing feedback on existing services as well as suggestions for improving health outcomes. Local health staff report on what is happening in health and at the local Clinic. NWHHS offer feedback and guidance on issues raised and also take forward our ideas as well as seeking our input on projects and programmes that they are, or considering, undertaking.

Issues that our local CAG have tackled recently are flu vaccines for all community members given we have no pharmacy to readily access them, dental care, aging in place, RFDS airstrips information,



By Kylie Camp  
Burketown CAG Chair

regular allied health access, patient travel, health provision to Bidunggu and improving feedback on local health services. Some members participated in a workshop about assessing local health needs and also First Nations health equity consultations.

The CAG members in all towns throughout the North West would love to hear from you about health – how you access it, can you access it, any shortfalls or gaps that aren't met and of course also the positive experiences you have had in having your health needs met. Your input and information helps your CAG advocate for the health needs of your community. North West HHS can connect you with CAGs in your area.

Please email:  
[nwhhs.engagement@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:nwhhs.engagement@health.qld.gov.au) for more information.



# From the Consumer Liaison Officer



Natasha Dew

We continue to welcome feedback from patients, their families and staff who have visited facilities across the North West. Visit the [North West HHS website](#) to leave your feedback.

## Consumer Compliment

"One of the best public hospitals I've been to! Very lovely staff doing their absolute best despite being run off their feet. The entire experience was exceptional - the doctors and nurses were terrific and kept me informed as best they could. Room was very clean and food was great. I was very impressed with everything. Thank you to all the staff."

Leave your feedback by scanning the QR code





## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health



Health Equity Strategy

# Health Equity Strategy development in progress

For the last several months now, there has been considerable work occurring across our communities, hosting consultations with Elders, community meetings, stakeholder meetings, hearing from Traditional Owner groups, and our own staff towards developing a Health Equity Strategy. We have heard our communities tell us they want to move beyond acknowledgment and amplify their First Nations' voices.

The draft Health Equity Strategy will be released soon and we will be seeking staff and community feedback. North West HHS invites you to be part of this process and work with us on finalising our Health Equity Strategy by the legislative timeframe of September 2022. To find out more about how you can be involved, contact Synara Rankine Johnson (Senior Project Officer) on 4744 4468.

"Health equity won't be achieved by treating everyone equally, but by treating everyone justly, based on their circumstances and need."

Christine Mann  
Executive Director Aboriginal  
Torres Strait Islander Health

## Goals of the First Nations Health Equity reform agenda include:



Actively eliminate racial  
discrimination and  
institutional racism



Increasing access to  
healthcare services



Influencing the social,  
cultural and economic  
determinants of health



Delivering sustainable,  
culturally safe and  
responsive healthcare  
service



Work with First Nations  
people, communities and  
organisations to design,  
deliver, monitor and  
review health services



## Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health



Shannon Ah Sam

# From trainee health worker to managing a team

Born and raised in Mount Isa, Shannon has a passion for serving the north west community. Coming from a family of nurses, doctors, paramedics and health workers, working in the health sector was the natural progression for Shannon.

In 2013, Shannon commenced as a trainee health worker, before going on to complete her Certificate III in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care and Certificate IV in Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (Practice).

Since her time as a Generalist Health Worker and then as an Advanced Health Worker, Shannon has worn many hats in the HHS including, Team Leader of Hearing and Vision Health, Indigenous Workforce Coordinator, and more recently First Nations COVID Response Lead.

“The best part about working at North West HHS is having the opportunity to engage with our First Nations population and do my part in ensuring services are being provided and our communities have equal access,” she said.

# A pillar providing cultural and community engagement support to our COVID teams

Shannon has continued to be a health hero since the beginning of the COVID pandemic. Initially, when remote communities were subject to biosecurity restrictions leaving many citizens in Mount Isa requiring to isolate before returning to communities, Shannon was pivotal in providing daily health checks across three accommodation providers in the region and dealing with additional concerns such as patients' access to medications, banking issues, as well as being a support to the whirlpool of emotions that people had during such an uncertain time.

As a proud Eastern Arrernte and Kalkadoon woman, Shannon has continued to be a pillar in providing clinical, cultural and community engagement support to our COVID teams who travelled across the region administering vaccinations to protect our vulnerable north west communities.

"It's not always smooth sailing, with continual respectful conversations that need to occur to successfully work across difference, and the current health equity reform agenda is a significant shift that reinforces what myself and many of my First Nations colleagues have worked to achieve for so long."

Shannon has recently commenced in the role of Manager Chronic Disease, Community and Primary Health, an achievement to be proud of as she has worked tirelessly through the health service making change for First Nations communities.



Executive Director Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Christine Mann said having passionate and enthusiastic staff like Shannon contributes to strengthening the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce across the health service.

"We know that to deliver the best quality health care to the communities in which we service, our workforce must reflect those communities. By increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees across all health professions, we can continue building a workforce that provides culturally safe and competent health services to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population," she said.

"The North West HHS Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy 2019-2026 supports the aim of increasing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce to 26 percent by 2026, but also is about enabling career progression within our organisation, just as Shannon has."

# NAIDOC Week 2022

North West HHS staff joined together to recognise NAIDOC week this year. NAIDOC Week is a special week where we get to celebrate the many First Nations people within our organisation and the broader community, who inspire future generations with their dedication and passion.

North West HHS staff marched together in the NAIDOC Street March through the Mount Isa CBD followed by joining in the celebrations for the Family Fun Day at the Mount Isa Civic Centre. Hosted by MobFM, the annual event has food stalls, live entertainment and giveaways.



*"This year's theme of 'Get up! Stand up! Show up!' sends a strong message to all Australians to galvanise and work towards meaningful change."*

Christine Mann  
Executive Director Aboriginal  
Torres Strait Islander Health





# Spotlight on Cloncurry

The North West HHS delivers health services to the communities of North West Queensland, serving a population of around 27,000 people across one regional hospital, two multi-purpose health services, three remote hospitals, four primary health clinics and five community health centres.

One of these communities is Cloncurry, situated 120km east of Mount Isa, with a population of 3200, and home to the Cloncurry Multipurpose Health Service which employs 77 people.

Cloncurry Hospital provides rural and remote hospital services including an inpatient facility, a residential aged care facility, an emergency department, and an outpatient department.

Community health services provide an aged care assessment team, sexual health, chronic disease management, diabetes education, mental health, alcohol and drug service, school health, child and youth health, women's health, palliative care, physiotherapy, dietician, and optometry services.

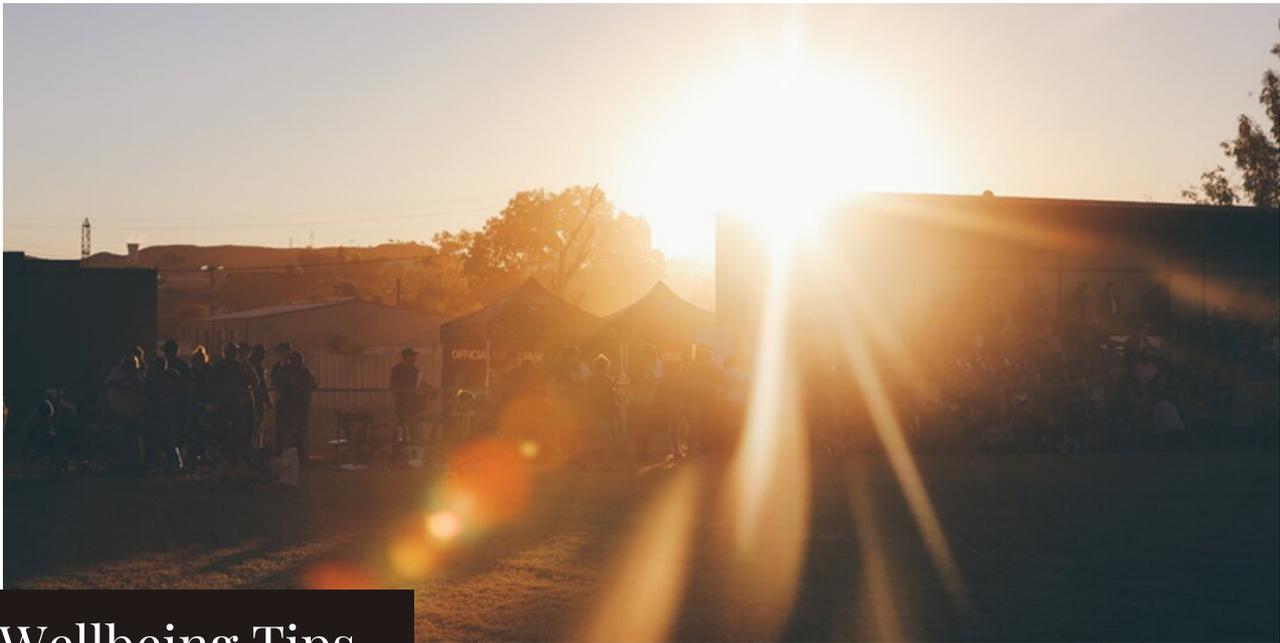
*Affectionately known as the “Curry”, the town was Founded by Ernest Henry in 1867 with the discovery of copper.*

Cloncurry’s core industries include grazing, transport services, copper and gold mining. It is the birthplace of the Royal Flying Doctor Service and destination of the first Qantas flight. To learn more about Cloncurry, visit the local council [website](#).





Wellbeing



Wellbeing Tips

# Stay well and avoid burnout

Burnout is a state of complete mental, physical, and emotional exhaustion. If you are experiencing burnout, you may notice it is difficult to engage in activities you normally find meaningful. Burnout is not caused solely by stressful work environments or too many responsibilities. It can be experienced by anyone with prolonged levels of chronic stress and pressure causing overwhelm as work or home demands.

Now is the time to pause and change direction by learning how you can help yourself overcome burnout.

### *What you can do:*

- Turn to friends, colleagues or community groups for support.
- Reevaluate your priorities by taking time off or regular breaks during the day
- Make physical activity a priority to boost your mood and energy
- Support your body with a healthy diet and quality sleep



**Are you concerned that your or your loved one's health condition is getting worse and you feel you are not being heard?**

We acknowledge that you know your loved one better than anyone. You may feel your health concern is not being acted upon. If you have these concerns about your or your loved one's health condition, you are encouraged to seek assistance by following the steps below.

# How to follow Ryan's Rule



**Step 1:** Talk to a nurse or doctor about your concerns.



**Step 2:** If you aren't satisfied with the response, talk to the nurse in charge of the shift.



**Step 3:** If you're still concerned call **13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)** and request a **Ryan's Rule** review.



## Dietitian's Corner

# Delight the senses with this one-pot vegetable tortellini dish

North West HHS Dietitian Courtney Heal shares one of her favourite family meals. With a range of delicious vegetables, be sure to add this simple dish to your next meal plan.

### Ingredients

- spray oil
- 1 teaspoon minced garlic or 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 4 cups chopped vegetables such as onion, carrot, and celery
- 400g can chopped tomatoes with mixed herbs
- 5-6 cups hot liquid salt-reduced vegetable or garlic stock made with 2 teaspoons salt-reduced stock powder
- 300g pack fresh spinach and ricotta tortellini pasta or chicken tortellini pasta
- 400g can kidney beans or butter beans, drained, rinsed
- 400g can chickpeas, drained, rinsed

### Method

Heat a large non-stick pan with oil spray. Cook garlic with chopped vegetables until softened.

Add tomatoes and stock. Bring to the boil. Simmer for 10 minutes.

Add tortellini, beans and chickpeas. Cook for 5 minutes.

Garnish with basil and serve immediately with fresh parmesan cheese shavings.



# You are not alone.

## **Support is available.**

If you feel overwhelmed, talk to a health professional. Speak to your GP about what support you need and how you can access it.

Pathways to better health for our North West communities

North West Hospital and Health Service

# BALANCE



## **Do you have a story that needs to be shared?**

Contact North West HHS  
Public Relations

07 4744 4871

[NWHHS\\_Communication@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:NWHHS_Communication@health.qld.gov.au)

