

Upon the introduction of the *Human Rights Act 2019* (Queensland) (HR Act), we have acknowledged this commitment in the Plan. Since mid-2019, Sunshine Coast Health has focused on building a human rights culture across all facilities and services.

During this reporting period, Sunshine Coast Health has demonstrated significant progress in its human rights culture by the way it incorporates human rights into its actions and decisions.

Highlights from 2023-2024 include:

- Genuine partnerships and consultation with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, staff, patients, and community members to better understand how to deliver health services to care for their distinct cultural needs and improve health and wellbeing.
- The implementation of the *Health Equity Strategy*
- Continuing to embed a human rights culture across Sunshine Coast Health's facilities including through the development and review of policies and procedures

Sunshine Health has continued to integrate the Human Rights Act 2019 into organisational processes. Our staff have access to an online human rights training package to further support their understanding of when decisions and actions engage human rights.

In 2023–2024 Sunshine Coast Health assessed 44 employee COVID-related complaints and one general employee complaint as potentially relevant to the Human Rights Act 2019. One complaint was made to the Australian Human Rights Commission and is ongoing, one was referred to an internal department for management, and the remainder require no health service action and have been referred back to the complainant for further information.

Confidential information

The *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011* requires annual reports to state the nature and purpose of any confidential information disclosed in the public interest during the financial year.

The Chief Executive did not authorise the disclosure of confidential information during the reporting period.

Our performance

The following provides an overview of strategic priorities and key performance indicators (KPIs) in the *Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service Strategic Plan 2022–2026*. Table 10 also provides an overview of Sunshine Coast Health's performance against the service standards.

Our care

We are focused on providing high-quality, equitable, accessible, person-centred care.

Developing Tertiary Services at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital

Maxillofacial Surgery

Following the successful recruitment of an oral, facial maxillary surgeon to the Sunshine Coast University Hospital, maxillofacial surgery commenced with the first outpatient clinic and operating session undertaken in late 2023.

Thoracic Surgery

A new thoracic surgical service was introduced at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital this year following the successful recruitment of a thoracic surgeon. Following service development planning, education and simulation sessions, the first clinic commenced in January 2024.

New services

A number of new services were introduced this financial year to further support equitable, accessible, person-centred care including:

- A day procedure flexible cystoscopy service at Gympie Hospital.
- A speech therapy clinic for outpatients with voice conditions at Gympie Hospital.
- An outpatient hysteroscopy service at Nambour General Hospital supporting women to access a hysteroscopy under local anaesthetic in as little as one to two hours.
- Nurturing OUR InfantS in the Home (NOURISH) service commenced to help babies get home sooner and receive ongoing care at home.
- Planning commenced as the first-in-Queensland publicly funded home birth program.

Reducing Hospital Acquired Complication rates

Hospital Acquired Complication rates are monitored regularly across Sunshine Coast University Hospital, Nambour General Hospital and Gympie Hospital. The key performance indicator outlined in the *Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service Strategic Plan 2022–2026* of a rate below the 25th percentile of peer hospitals has been met this financial year.

Reducing pressure on busy emergency departments

At the end of the 2022-2023 financial year a new STREAM model of care was implemented at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital Emergency Department. The model of care was initiated to manage the volume and demand for services and invest in patient flow within our hospitals. The model of care has seen a significant improvement to our emergency department flow, including when the Sunshine Coast University Hospital had its busiest month ever in January 2024. The model complements the purpose-built command centre located at Sunshine Coast University Hospital which uses real-time data and modelling to monitor and coordinate patient arrivals, admissions, and departures.

Increasing Rapid Access Services

The Rapid Access Services program enables specialist clinical units to maintain ongoing care, responsibility, and oversight for the non-elective care of their patients when they experience an exacerbation of chronic illness at home. It provides opportunity to test different access mechanisms for patients known to the health service and their General Practitioners, for urgent clinical needs which do not require a presentation to Emergency Department (ED) or readmission.

At Sunshine Coast University Hospital, rapid access to clinical care is enabled for known or existing patients with emergent conditions likely to necessitate an emergency department presentation.

This Rapid Access Service has is a well-established preventative healthcare initiative as well as an alternative pathway to urgent care and has reduced hospital readmissions.

Command Centre

Construction was complete this year on a \$3.1 million Command Centre at Sunshine Coast University Hospital to support patient flow. The focus of the purpose-built command centre is to ensure local patients have access to a hospital bed when needed, as it gives staff a service-wide view of bed demand, capacity, and patient flow.

Queensland Ambulance Service staff will also be based within the Command Centre, allowing the two services to work closely together and ensuring patients receive care in the most appropriate place. The total investment for the project was \$5 million, including \$1.9 million in infrastructure and ICT improvements for other Sunshine Coast Health facilities to link in with the Command Centre.

Mental Health Co-Responder program

Work continued this year on the Mental Health Co-Responder program which pairs a senior Queensland Ambulance Service paramedic with a senior mental health clinician from the Sunshine Coast University Hospital. The co-responder program enables the delivery of fast and collaborative specialist care to people experiencing mental health crises. By treating people in their homes, the program also diverts people away from Emergency Departments and eases pressure on our whole health system.

Patient Reported Experience Measures (PREMs)

The data collected from patients about their experience in our hospitals is an important way for Sunshine Coast Health to improve services. A PREMs survey is sent to patients to complete with information on their healthcare visit including communication and involvement in decision making. This year, 76 per cent of patients completing the PREMs survey provided a rating of 'very good' for Sunshine Coast Health inpatient PREMs. The KPI outlined in the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service Strategic Plan 2022–2026 is 75 per cent.

Health Service Plan

The 2024-2034 Health Service Plan was delivered this year providing a 10 year roadmap for future service delivery. It outlines our vision for a responsive, integrated, and consumer-centred healthcare system that promotes wellness, prevents illness, and provides timely and equitable care for all.

The plan looks at the unique challenges and opportunities facing the Sunshine Coast including population growth, an ageing population, and the need to address lifestyle-related health issues. It also acknowledges the importance of mental health, access to care, and the role of technology in healthcare delivery.

Connecting care to recovery: Queensland Health Mental Health, Alcohol, and Other Drugs Plan

This year we worked to implement a number of service priorities for mental health, alcohol, and other drugs including an expansion of the inpatient mental health treatment capacity and improved quality of treatment facilities at Nambour General Hospital. The works included two adult treatment units and we received positive feedback from patients accessing care in the newly refurbished spaces.

Sunshine Coast Health also responded to the increase in demand for Opiate Treatment Programs with the introduction of a Long-Acting Injectable treatment program. This program is the recommended treatment for opioid dependence and improves outcomes for patients.

Exemplar site for the first Queensland publicly funded home birth service

Sunshine Coast University Hospital was named as the exemplar site for the first publicly funded home birth service in Queensland. From mid-2024, expectant mothers with a low-risk pregnancy can choose to birth at home under the new home birth service. The new service was developed in collaboration with midwives, obstetricians, paediatricians, neonatologists, Queensland Ambulance Service, as well as consumers.

Unsedated transnasal endoscopy

Sunshine Coast Health is constantly looking for innovative ways to provide high quality care to our patients, which is why this year we commenced offering unsedated transnasal endoscopy to eligible patients. This novel technique not only eliminates the need for sedation but also allows for the patient to remain fully awake and comfortable throughout the transnasal endoscopy procedure. The use of numbing spray, combined with the insertion of a thin gastroscope through the nose, makes the experience more patient-friendly. Unlike traditional methods that often require a longer recovery period, this innovative approach minimizes disruption to patients' daily lives. With the procedure taking as little as five minutes to complete, patients can go back to daily activities almost immediately with very little downtime.

First in-house prostheses patient 'graduates' from rehab

The first inpatient to receive prosthetic limbs made and fitted in-house at Sunshine Coast University Hospital has 'graduated' from the rehabilitation unit. The patient was injured in a motor vehicle crash, with his injuries leading to both legs needing amputation. Following a long recovery process, the patient was then able to have his prosthetic legs made and fitted, while continuing to receive care from the rehabilitation team at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital. Being able to make prostheses in-house also means patients can continue to undergo rehabilitation as inpatients, while adjusting to their prostheses.

New crisis support space

The Sunshine Coast is receiving a much-needed boost in mental health support with the opening of a new Crisis Support Space at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital.

People experiencing mental health distress or crisis can walk in or be referred from the emergency department to the Crisis Support Space where they can access face-to-face mental health support. The opening of this space means people can receive care away from emergency departments and in environments designed by others with lived experiences to feel welcoming, calm and therapeutic.

People visiting the space will be able to relax, talk to someone who will take time to listen and then leave with tools, skills and links to various community organisations. Trained peer workers with lived experience and mental health clinicians are on hand to provide support.

This work forms part of the Government's Better Care Together plan, a five-year, \$1.645 billion investment to improve access to mental health, alcohol, and other drug services by 2027.

Our people

We value and support our people.

Increasing our identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce

In 2022 Sunshine Coast Health set the ambitious goal of between 2.2 per cent- 2.63 per cent of our workforce identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander by 2024. At the end of June 2024, we have 1.96 per cent of our workforce identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Whilst we have not met this strategic goal by the delivery timeline, we will continue to work towards this goal by supporting culturally appropriate care and attracting skilled Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to our health service.

A healthy, safe, and well workforce

The Workforce Wellbeing Framework was endorsed this year with a network of over 70 ambassadors engaged to implement wellbeing initiatives across the organisation. Several activities were undertaken this year including wellbeing expos, upskilling of line managers, and a staff wellbeing program.

Micro Skills series

The successful Micro Skills training sessions from 2022-2023 were again promoted this year to develop the leadership skills of our workforce. The Micro Skills training courses are a three-minute takeaway guide designed to build practical team skills, good decision-making, setting expectations, and creating a safe workplace protecting staff from harm.

Diversity and Inclusion

Ensuring our health service is a healthy and psychologically safe environment was one of our key priorities this year. We have again invested in the diversity of our workforce through a number of celebration days to encourage staff and consumer participation. We value diversity and inclusion and recognise that a diverse workforce contributes to better business outcomes through higher innovation, creativity, improved team engagement, and risk management. This is the second year of our Workforce Diversity and Inclusion strategy with actions completed from the action plan including regular meetings with key stakeholders and network groups.

Fatigue Risk Management

This year the Fatigue Risk Management System (FRMS) was implemented as a set of management practices, beliefs and procedures for monitoring and managing the risks posed to health, safety and wellbeing by fatigue. This system follows the Queensland Health Fatigue Risk Management Policy (QH-POL-171) and recommendations outlined in the Queensland Health Fatigue Risk Management System Resource Pack developed by the Department of Health, and the Fatigue Risk Management Systems Implementation Guideline developed to identify and manage fatigue risks within Queensland Health workplaces, in order to meet employer and employee responsibilities in managing fatigue risk.

The framework demonstrates Sunshine Coast Health's commitment to providing safe systems of work and a safe environment for employees, patients and consumers by reducing fatigue risk to as low as reasonably practicable.

Occupational Violence Prevention

Sunshine Coast Health is committed to ensuring a systematic approach to the prevention of occupational violence and aggressive behaviour in the workplace by establishing a mandatory framework for early identification, prevention and protection. Our occupational violence prevention training provides conflict management and physical intervention training that allows clinically related challenging behaviour to be managed effectively.

Leadership Program - Leadership in Action program

The Leadership in Action Program was also developed this financial year with a focus on equipping line managers with the tools to successfully manage and lead teams. The program aims to equip leaders with essential knowledge, tools, and resources for operational success. The program includes an innovation module to encourage workplace innovation.

The program consists of seven modules, each addressing specific operational management capability gaps and training requirements identified through the 2023 Training Needs Analysis and the Staff Culture Survey. Real-world scenario-based practical activities are incorporated to facilitate the translation of acquired skills and knowledge.

Culture survey

In the 2022-23 year, Best Practice Australia was engaged to deliver a culture survey encouraging staff to provide feedback on their experiences working within Sunshine Coast Health. Following the delivery of results, a number of the recommendations have been undertaken including Executive rounding, senior staff mentoring, and Chief Executive Listening Clinics that have encouraged staff to meet directly with the health service chief executive to express the opportunities and challenges of their working environment.

Leadership Portal

The Sunshine Coast Health Leadership Portal was launched this year underpinned by the Sunshine Coast Health Leadership Capability Framework. The portal was designed for all staff as a place to gain inspiration and work towards personal and professional leadership goals. At Sunshine Coast Health, we believe that everyone can be a leader, regardless of role, classification level, or whether there are formal responsibilities to manage people, everyone plays a key role in leading the Health Service into the future.

Nursing and midwifery graduates launch careers at Sunshine Coast Health

One hundred and forty nursing (registered nurses and enrolled nurses) and 18 midwifery graduates commenced their careers across Sunshine Coast Health in 2024, including Sunshine Coast University Hospital, Gympie Hospital, Nambour General Hospital, and Caloundra Health Service. The graduates undertook orientation, including patient assessment workshops, before completing clinical unit induction supported by the clinical coaches and preceptors. Clinical coaches provide hands on bedside clinical support and education, in a supportive manner within the clinical coach framework, with opportunities to consolidate clinical skill development.

The graduate nurses and midwives are transitioning into their health professional role. They positively contributing to providing excellent care to the Sunshine Coast and Gympie community in maternity, medical, surgical, and a variety of specialties.

Welcoming 73 new medical interns

The future faces of the region's medical industry have hit the wards of Sunshine Coast Health's hospitals, after years of study and training. Sunshine Coast Health this year welcomed 73 medical interns who are working in crucial roles, while continuing to expand their skills, with supervision and training from some of the service's most experienced doctors. The interns' first year of practise after graduating from university is an exciting jump forward, and the culmination of years of study.

Sunshine Coast Health has designed a comprehensive program, to ensure the interns have a positive and supportive experience, that successfully leads to them gaining their general registration.

Our sustainability

We manage our financial, physical, and environmental resources responsibly.

Nambour General Hospital redevelopment

The Nambour General Hospital continued works this year on its \$86 million redevelopment with construction due for completion in the next financial year. The redevelopment will increase the bed capacity at Nambour and better service the growing health needs of the Sunshine Coast. The redevelopment will be delivered within the existing hospital and includes:

- increased capacity of emergency care
- more beds for mental health patients
- increased capacity of wards for surgical and medical patients
- a new same-day rehabilitation unit
- a new purpose-built space for the renal dialysis unit
- relocation and refurbishment of cancer care services, including same-day medical infusions and chemotherapy
- a new central sterilising unit
- a new courtyard and drop-off zone located near the emergency department
- a new kitchen.

During the financial year, several milestones were reached including:

- a new emergency department
- same day rehabilitation unit
- relocation and refurbishment of cancer care services.

While the redevelopment is taking place, the hospital has remained open and has continued to provide patient services.

Gympie Staff Accommodation

An \$8 million, 24-bed staff accommodation facility was built this year at Gympie Hospital, as part of the Building Rural and Remote Health Program, a component of the Department of Health's Sustaining Capital Program, established to improve infrastructure critical to the delivery of health services in rural and remote communities.

The building features sustainable design elements, including energy efficiency and disability access and include 24 beds, a laundry, and meal preparation area.

Integrated electronic Medical Record (ieMR) Hub and Spoke

The integrated electronic medical record (ieMR) Hub and Spoke project has been successfully implemented at Caloundra Health Service this year. The success of this project will continue the expansion of ieMR across the health service with Maleny Soldiers Memorial Hospital and Gympie Hospital scheduled to be rolled out later next financial year.

Works commence at Maleny Soldiers Memorial Hospital

Works commenced at the Maleny Soldiers Memorial Hospital with an investment in internal and external infrastructure, a new mechanical plant, and a new roof. The \$2.8 million infrastructure investment will help to improve patient experience for the Maleny community. The emergency department and specialist outpatients remained open for the duration of the works.

Busiest month ever at Sunshine Coast University Hospital

Sunshine Coast Health emergency departments are treating more patients than ever before, with 56,549 presentations between October and December 2023. This is a four per cent increase compared with the same period in the previous year. In its busiest month ever, an average of 330 patients presented to Sunshine Coast University Hospital (SCUH) Emergency Department each day in December. Importantly, every one of our sickest or most critically injured patients (Category 1) were seen within clinically recommended timeframes. Across all five categories, the median wait time was just 15 minutes.

Health service performance

Sunshine Coast Health has again seen unprecedented demand for its services. We have seen significant improvements in waitlists for elective surgery and specialist outpatients and we have been focussed on growing our services to better meet the needs of our communities.

We have seen an increase in the presentations to our emergency departments and despite this increase, all of our category one (our sickest patients) were seen within clinically recommended timeframes. Although we have more people than ever before accessing our services, we've provided more care than ever before. We acknowledge that we still have some patients waiting longer than clinically recommended, we have been working hard to recruit skilled frontline clinicians to support the efficiency and effectiveness of our care.

We have been working to support patient flow, improving value for money for patient care, and efficiency and effectiveness through our emergency departments with a number of initiatives including streaming patients within the emergency department, interim care beds, and optimisation of Hospital in the Home.

Virtual care

Virtual care continues to be delivered to the community as part of the Virtual Acute Care Service. The Virtual Acute Care Service is an outpatient service providing short-term virtual medical and nursing oversight seven days per week to patients in the Sunshine Coast Health catchment.

Dedicated Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Space at Sunshine Coast University Hospital

This year, a public-facing space opened at Sunshine Coast University Hospital to create a comfortable and culturally appropriate area for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members accessing healthcare. The space is centrally located in the hospital's food and shopfronts area to make the team more accessible and to provide a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This new space was designed in response to the community's needs and is expected to increase engagement with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health team. It addresses several priority areas identified in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equity Strategy 2022-2031, including preventing hospitalisations, avoiding emergency department visits, and increasing access to healthcare.

Our future

We improve and prepare for the future through research, education, and innovation.

Study, Education, Research, Training Fund grants

Six Sunshine Coast Health professionals were this year awarded significant Study, Education, Research, Training Fund grants to carry out innovative research into healthcare issues impacting our local communities. The projects include a women's health study comparing new and traditional methods of inducing labour, research into improving diagnosis and treatment for serious lung diseases, the effect of exercise on gut biology and liver health, improving skin cancer detection using technology, and evaluating a model of care that supports young families.

Staff across the health service are each year invited to apply for the grant scheme supported by the Study, Education, Research Training Fund and Wishlist.

New Executive Director appointed to the Sunshine Coast Health Institute (SCHI)

This year a new Executive Director was appointed to the Sunshine Coast Health Institute to support the strategic direction of health education, collaboration, and innovation. The inaugural Executive Director will drive the establishment of a centre of excellence in implementation sciences with a focus on novel models of care and workforce.

The Sunshine Coast Health Institute's co-location builds our region's capacity and capability through health education, collaboration, and innovation. SCHI is a joint venture collaborative partnership between Sunshine Coast Health, University of the Sunshine Coast, TAFE Queensland, and Griffith University. The Institute is a dedicated health education, training, and research facility, contributing to the Sunshine Coast Health vision for health and wellbeing through exceptional care.

Recognition from the Australasian Rehabilitation Outcomes Centre

Sunshine Coast University Hospital's rehabilitation team was this year recognised as having the best stroke rehabilitation outcomes, out of 265 participating hospitals across Australasia. The team were awarded the honour for their outstanding results in data collected by the Australasian Rehabilitation Outcomes Centre in recognition of their exceptional care to help restore patients' function and wellbeing.

Distinction Award for the provision of timely thrombolysis treatment

This year the Sunshine Coast University Hospital received a Distinction Award for the provision of timely thrombolysis treatment. Sunshine Coast University Hospital received a Gold Status Award, under the World Stroke Organization Angels Awards. The Acute Networks StrivinG for Excellence in Stroke initiative is industry-led (Boehringer Ingelheim), works in partnership with the European Stroke Organisation, and has been endorsed by the World Stroke Organisation.

The Quality Stroke Service Awards, now in their fifth year, were established by the Australian Stroke Coalition to acknowledge hospitals providing quality care for patients experiencing an ischaemic stroke (a stroke caused by a blockage cutting off the blood supply to the brain). A composite score, based on indicator data provided by hospitals to the Australian Stroke Clinical Registry, is used to determine the awards.

Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Project improves the lives of patients with complex injuries

Sunshine Coast residents with brain and spinal cord injuries now have access to a new Neuro Intensive Rehabilitation and Complex Concussion Clinic, to help improve day-to-day life. Following a successful pilot, Sunshine Coast Health has announced the program will receive ongoing funding to provide day rehabilitation for people with neurological injuries such as stroke, traumatic brain injury, spinal cord injury, and concussion.

People who are experiencing disabilities related to nervous system damage can now safely live at home, while receiving treatment from the Neuro Intensive Rehab program at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital. The program offers holistic and specialised neuro-rehabilitation from a multidisciplinary team, working together to restore the patient's function. The Complex Concussion Clinic is also now fully funded and provides rehabilitation for patients experiencing new concussion or persistent post-concussive symptoms, with 86 per cent achieving significant functional recovery and returning to their usual life roles after a block of outpatient treatment.

New era of robotic surgery at Sunshine Coast Health

A new \$4 million surgical robot has arrived on the Sunshine Coast ready to provide patients with improved outcomes. To perform surgery with the robot, the surgeon sits down and views the surgical field through a high definition, 3D screen inside the robot's console. They then use their hands and feet to control the instruments to make delicate and precise movements to perform the operation. The instruments on the equipment accurately mimic a surgeon's wrist and finger movements, while the arms and camera allow stability, minimise tremors and improve the field of vision to achieve the best possible outcomes for patients.

Intricate surgeries that require extra fine techniques see particularly positive outcomes for patients with the Da Vinci robot including:

- shorter hospital stays
- less pain and discomfort
- faster recovery and return to regular activities
- smaller incisions, resulting in less risk of infection
- reduced blood loss and need for transfusions
- minimising scarring.

The Robotic Surgery program at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital will commence with Urological procedures later next financial year with the view to expand to other types of surgery in the future.

Digital program takes memory rehab to rural patients

Rural patients recovering from brain injuries or neurological issues are now able to access evidence-based memory rehabilitation, through a remote program offered by Sunshine Coast Health.

The Sunshine Coast University Hospital's Neuro-Intensive Rehabilitation Service has adopted the MemoRehab program, as a way to bring more effective rehabilitation to a wider number of patients. MemoRehab is a 6-week group-based online program, which involves video-call sessions and digital work to be completed at home.

Strategy and Planning

Sunshine Coast Health has released a 10 year roadmap outlining the future of healthcare in the region, as the service prepares for an unprecedented increase in demand.

The Health Services Plan 2024-2034 explores how the service plans to address the unique challenges and opportunities presented by an ageing population with high levels of chronic disease, combined with a rapidly growing population.

Research and clinical trials

The strategic measure has been met, with the total new approvals meeting the 20 per cent target. In the 2023, 84 new research projects were approved – an increase of 20 per cent compared to 2021.

Of these projects, 38 were new clinical trials, increasing from 18 in 2021.

The research portfolio continues to progressively grow, with the total number of active projects expected to exceed 400 in 2024 (growing from 355 in 2021). There are 384 projects currently active, with another 40 currently undergoing Governance review.

Q1 and Q2 journal publications

Sunshine Coast Health has been linked to 203 publications in 2023 (as reported in June 2024).

Of these, 85 per cent (170) are in Q1 and Q2 journals (2026 annual target 226). While the number of publications in 2023 is overall lower than in 2021 and 2022, it is considered that Sunshine Coast Health is on track to meet this strategic measure by 2026. There is a substantial lead time between commencement of research projects and publication, including longer review cycles by high-impact (Q1 and Q2) journals.

The increase in research projects, and cohort of collaborative researchers gives significant confidence that publication numbers will follow.

Clinical department research teams

The Strategic Plan KPI of 75 per cent of clinical departments having an identified research team and active research projects has been met. Research is currently conducted in eight service groups, across 51 different Clinical Departments, on par with 2023 and representing an increase of 20 per cent in the number of active Departments in comparison to 2022 (42 active Departments) and 2021 (43).

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

Sunshine Coast Health acknowledges and pays respect to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders, people, consumers, and staff, past, present, and future, on whose lands we provide health services to all Queenslanders. We are committed to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and providing respectful and responsive services.

Health Equity

Since the Health Equity Strategy and its associated implementation plan were launched in 2023, Sunshine Coast Health has made strides towards its goals, meeting 23 of its key performance indicators (KPIs) in the first 12 months. Additionally, 13 KPIs are works in progress and 8 continue to require attention. Significant achievements include:

- The expansion of our hospital liaison service and preventable hospitalisation program.
- Opening of a dedicated, public-facing space at Sunshine Coast University Hospital, to create a culturally appropriate space for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community accessing healthcare.
- Installation of artworks at all five of our facilities to provide a more culturally appropriate and welcoming environment.
- Successful implementation of Deadly Start School-based Traineeship program and the statewide cadetship program.
- Implemented priority pathways for audiology and respiratory services.

Cultural Practice Program

This year we achieved the health service's highest compliance rate (77.6 per cent) with the mandatory Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Practice Program training. The Sunshine Coast Health training has also been accredited by four medical colleges.

There are four guiding principles covered through the online and face-to-face sessions:

- cultural respect and recognition
- relationships and partnerships
- capacity building
- communication.

The Sunshine Coast Health Cultural Practice Program is delivered in a blended format of self-paced online training and a three-hour face-to-face/virtual session. In 2023/24 education was provided to 2309 employees.

Workforce Action Plan

Sunshine Coast Health is committed to developing a culturally responsive, inclusive, and educated workforce to negate discrimination and racism. The Workforce Action Plan 2023-2026 focuses on cultural integrity and strengthening career pathways. Our aim is to create a workplace to attract and retain Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people by providing a culturally safe work environment that:

- includes representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff
- provides rewarding career pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff
- establishes Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service as an employer of choice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

At the end June 2024, our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce participation rate was 1.96 per cent (or 185 staff).

Cultural celebrations

National Sorry Day was commemorated with a special service at Gympie Hospital. This event was well attended by staff and community.

Reconciliation Week was celebrated this year with the Nyina Budja (Live Strong) Health Equity Conference. About than 200 delegates attended from across Australia.

The Aunty Betty Reconciliation Walk, led by the Sunshine Coast Reconciliation Group in partnership with Sunshine Coast Health, North Coast Aboriginal Corporation for Community Health, Suncare, Sunshine Coast Council, Refocus and Buderim Private Hospital, was attended by a large number of school students from Gympie and the Sunshine Coast, community and Traditional Owners. National Aboriginal and Islanders Day Observance Committee (NAIDOC) Week celebrations were held in July to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's history, culture, and achievements.

Hospital Liaison Service

Sunshine Coast Health's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Hospital Liaison Service provides a cultural link between health professionals, identified Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and their families.

The health service has extended the hours of Hospital Liaison Officers to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients presenting to the emergency department after hours at Nambour General Hospital and Sunshine Coast University Hospital. The service continues to work hard to reduce the number of patients who do not wait for treatment, discharge against medical advice and those who fail to attend outpatient appointments.

Preventative health

The Preventable Health Program supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with existing chronic health conditions. The program runs for up to 12 weeks with support from our health workers, clinical nurses, dietitian, social worker and accredited exercise physiologists. Our team provide social, cultural, and emotional wellbeing support to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community, including home visiting, regular contact, and referral to other services to meet needs and preferences. Our health workers also deliver health-related programs in schools and wellbeing group sessions in the community.

Cultural Healing

The Cultural Healing team provides mental health support to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers that considers their physical, social, emotional, cultural and spiritual wellbeing.

Jabba Jabba

The Jabba Jabba Child Health teams provide home visiting services, baby health checks, hearing assessments, and home visiting vaccination programs for children.

Artwork unveiled at Sunshine Coast Health emergency departments

Sunshine Coast Health officially unveiled artwork during NAIDOC Week to hang in its Gympie, Maleny, Caloundra and Sunshine Coast University hospitals as part of its commitment to culturally safe and inclusive healthcare. We saw an opportunity to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art across our facilities to provide a more welcoming and culturally safe environment and we want our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to feel welcome, respected, and engaged in their healthcare. The artwork is just one of the ways we are implementing the outcomes of our 2022-2031 Sunshine Coast Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equity Strategy. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists have created art that represents our region and the connection of country to health.

Nyina Budja Health Equity Conference

Sunshine Coast Health is committed to providing culturally safe and inclusive healthcare, which is why we this year we proudly hosted the Nyina Budja (Live Strong) Health Equity Conference in May.

Held during Reconciliation Week, the conference was part of the Sunshine Coast Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equity Strategy (2022 – 2031). With speakers from across Australia, the conference was well attended and focussed on all aspects of providing culturally safe healthcare to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Table 10: Service standards

Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service	2023-2024 Target	2023-2024 Actual
Effectiveness measures		
Percentage of emergency department patients seen within recommended timeframes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 1 (within 2 minutes) • Category 2 (within 10 minutes) • Category 3 (within 30 minutes) • Category 4 (within 60 minutes) • Category 5 (within 120 minutes) 	100% 80% 75% 70% 70%	100% 79% 74% 75% 86%
Percentage of emergency department attendances who depart within 4 hours of their arrival in the department	>80%	64%
Percentage of elective surgery patients treated within the clinically recommended times ¹ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 1 (30 days) • Category 2 (90 days)¹ • Category 3 (365 days)¹ 	>98%	77% 75% 87%
Rate of healthcare associated Staphylococcus aureus (including MRSA) bloodstream (SAB) infections/10,000 acute public hospital patient days ²	<1.0	0.7
Rate of community mental health follow up within 1-7 days following discharge from an acute mental health inpatient unit ^{3,4}	>65%	64.4%
Proportion of re-admissions to acute psychiatric care within 28 days of discharge ⁴	<12%	9.4%
Percentage of specialist outpatients waiting within clinically recommended times ⁵ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 1 (30 days) • Category 2 (90 days)⁶ • Category 3 (365 days)⁶ 	80%	73% 47% 83%
Percentage of specialist outpatients seen within clinically recommended times <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 1 (30 days) • Category 2 (90 days)⁶ • Category 3 (365 days)⁶ 	82%	84% 54% 67%
Median wait time for treatment in emergency departments (minutes) ⁷	..	15
Median wait time for elective surgery treatment (days)	..	41
Efficiency measure		
Average cost per weighted activity unit for Activity Based Funding facilities ⁸	\$5,445	\$5,614
Other measures		
Number of elective surgery patients treated within clinically recommended times <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Category 1 (30 days) • Category 2 (90 days)¹ • Category 3 (365 days)¹ 	4,310	4,616 3,708 2,496
Number of Telehealth outpatients service events ⁹	17,446	15,547
Total weighted activity units (WAU) ¹⁰ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Inpatients • Outpatients • Sub-acute • Emergency Department • Mental Health • Prevention and Primary Care 	119,415 37,139 11,217 29,918 11,269 4,176	121,432 41,862 13,397 28,460 11,801 4,189
Ambulatory mental health service contact duration (hours) ⁴	>64,184	61,292
Staffing ¹¹	6,692	7369.67

1	Treated in time performance Targets for category 2 and 3 patients are not applicable for 2023–2024 due to the System’s focus on reducing the volume of patients waiting longer than clinically recommended for elective surgery. The targets have been reinstated for 2024–2025.
2	Staphylococcus aureus (including MRSA) bloodstream (SAB) infections 2023–2024 Actual rate is based on data from 1 July 2023 to 31 March 2024 as at 14 May 2024.
3	Previous analysis has shown similar rates of follow up for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous Queenslanders are evident, but trends are impacted by a smaller number of separations for Indigenous Queenslanders.
4	Mental Health data is as at 19 August 2024.
5	Waiting within clinically recommended time is a point in time performance measure. 2023–2024 Actual is as at 1 July 2024.
6	Given the System’s focus on reducing the volume of patients waiting longer than clinically recommended for specialist outpatients, it is expected that higher proportions of patients seen from the waitlist will be long wait patients and the seen within clinically recommended time percentage will be lower. To maintain the focus on long wait reduction, the targets for category 2 and 3 patients are not applicable.
7	There is no nationally agreed target for this measure, and the median wait time varies depending on the proportion of patients in each urgency category.
8	Cost per WAU is reported in QWAU Phase Q26 and is based on data available on 19 August 2024. 2023–2024 Actual includes in-year funding, e.g. Cost of Living Allowance (COLA), Enterprise Bargaining uplift, Special Pandemic Leave payment, and additional funding for new initiatives.
9	Telehealth 2023–2024 Actual is as at 20 August 2024.
10	All measures are reported in QWAU Phase Q26. The 2023–2024 Actual is based on data available on 19 August 2024. As the Hospital and Health Services have operational discretion to respond to service demands and deliver activity across services streams to meet the needs of the community, variation to the Target can occur.
11	Corporate FTEs are allocated across the service to which they relate. The department participates in a partnership arrangement in the delivery of its services, whereby corporate FTEs are hosted by the department to work across multiple departments. 2023–2024 Actual is for pay period ending 23 June 2024.