

About us

Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service (Gold Coast Health) was established as a statutory body on 1 July 2012 under the *Hospital and Health Boards Act 2011*. Gold Coast Health is governed by the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Board and delivers a broad range of secondary and tertiary health services from three hospital sites (Gold Coast University Hospital, Robina Hospital and Varsity Lakes Day Hospital), two major allied health precincts (Southport and Robina), and 13 community-located facilities.

Our *Always Care* philosophy is central to our strategic direction. We recognise that the simplest acts of compassion can have significant impact – for patients, staff, the Gold Coast community, and our partners in care delivery. This, combined with our existing and developing world-class infrastructure, a highly talented and committed workforce, and strong partnerships with universities, Gold Coast Primary Health Network (GCPHN), Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health services, and the private and non-government sector (NGO), creates a culture of innovation in health care delivery.

The Gold Coast Hospital and Health Board comprises of Chair Mr Ian Langdon and nine members. The Board represents local community needs and expectations in addition to its governance role within the wider Queensland Health federated system.

A Consumer Advisory Group of community representatives also works with Gold Coast Health to improve our local health system by providing advice, feedback and guidance in relation to service delivery and quality and helping to ensure our *Always Care* philosophy is embedded into day-to-day operations.

Across our campuses, we have a reputation as one of Australia's leading teaching hospitals, committed to training the next generation of doctors, nurses and allied health professionals. Working under the supervision of senior clinicians, nursing students become nurses, medical students become doctors, and doctors become specialists at Gold Coast Health's facilities.

Strategic direction

Founded on our *Always Care* philosophy, the *Gold Coast Health Strategic Plan 2020–2024* guides the service's strategic direction with three key priorities:

- deliver world-class care – always
- make the best use of our resources
- drive future-focused change.

The *Gold Coast Health Strategic Plan 2020–2024*:

- recognises the need to grow and develop our infrastructure and workforce to meet the challenges our health service faces in a post-pandemic environment with a rapidly growing population
- welcomes the opportunity to embrace new technology, innovation, and a transformational culture to ensure highly reliable health care that meets community needs and ensures patient safety
- identifies the need to enhance partnerships with a collaborative 'one-system', optimising access for our diverse community and driving equitable and improved health outcomes for our consumers
- sets the goal to attract, retain and invest in a reliable, high-performing, diverse workforce to ensure our capacity and capability to achieve our vision within a safe, responsive, and inclusive work environment
- commits us to embedding research, cultural safety and appropriate pandemic responsiveness and recovery in our journey towards world-class care.

The *Gold Coast Health Strategic Plan 2020–2024* also supports the whole-of-health-service master planning direction, which is being used to drive planning of future new and expanded services to support growth, particularly in the northern Gold Coast.

Vision, purpose and values

Our vision

We will have the best health outcomes in Australia.

Our purpose

To be a leader in compassionate, sustainable, highly reliable healthcare.

Our values

Our work is driven by our six core values:

Integrity

To be open and accountable to the people we serve.

Community first

To have the patient's and the community's best interest at heart.

Respect

To listen, value and acknowledge each other.

Excellence

To strive for outstanding performance and outcomes.

Compassion

To treat others with understanding and sensitivity.

Empower

To take ownership and enable each other to achieve more.

Priorities

Gold Coast Health strives for a transformational culture that encourages agility, innovation and rapid knowledge translation for high-reliability health care delivery that meets community needs and ensures patient safety.

We prioritise and balance financial resources as health care demand grows, and we respond to emerging or unforeseen local or global challenges so we can provide equitable health care that maintains and improves health outcomes. Our performance aligns with the Queensland Government's objectives under *Unite and Recover – Queensland's Economic Recovery Plan* by:

Safeguarding our health by maximising our capacity to respond and stay pandemic-ready

In line with Queensland Government's Objective to safeguard our health by maximising our capacity to respond to growing demand and staying pandemic-ready, Gold Coast Health has prioritised recruitment to maintain safe services. Areas of focus include:

An agile workforce

To respond rapidly to changes in staffing levels, Gold Coast Health re-implemented the fast-track recruitment and onboarding model (Rapid Recruitment). This model included the establishment of multiple talent pools to attract candidates for COVID-19 vaccination centres, screening desks, fever clinics, quarantine facilities, COVID-19 wards, contact tracing, staff vaccination clinic, emergency departments, adult intensive care unit (ICU), theatre, environmental services, security, mental health services, midwifery, pharmacy, fit testing, and the virtual wards.

Total number recruited for COVID-19 and critical vacancies From July 2021 – February 2022

NQN EN	NQN RN	AIN	EN	RN	RM	CN	AO3	OO2	OO3	HP3	Grand Total (Headcount)
19	40	11	53	325	1	6	281	80	21	6	843

Early career doctors were highly agile during the Omicron wave, which coincided with the onboarding of our annual intake of 92 medical interns. Orientation was condensed and the new doctors became an important part of Gold Coast Health's COVID-19 response.

The Medical Workforce Support Unit worked closely with medical directors to adopt a ward-based roster for 100 interns, junior house officers, some senior house officers, and residents across mainly medical and surgical wards. This meant redeployment to clinical areas on a shift-by-shift basis, rather than working alongside one senior clinician for the duration of term one. Teamwork on the frontline was a key to the success and new doctors were adept at knowing their patients on the ward and their individual treatment plans well. Gold Coast Health engaged with the Australian Medical Council and Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency to ensure all junior doctor objectives and learning requirements were fulfilled.

The trouble-shooting skills learned, and the proactive approach taken by the medical cohort demonstrated Gold Coast Health's *Always Care* philosophy and values.

When surveyed after Term one, 24 per cent of the junior medical workforce who participated in the ward-based roster indicated that they got to know their patients, experienced wards that they may never have been exposed to and built good relationships with their nursing and allied health colleagues.

Safeguarding our health by maximising our capacity to respond to growing demand

Gold Coast Health is planning for and providing several infrastructure projects in response to a growing local population and need for additional services in our community. These programs support our strategic plan objectives to develop and deliver adequate health infrastructure solutions to meet the ongoing needs of our population and effectively forecast, plan and act to make the best use of our infrastructure and secure resources for the future. Examples include:

Emergency Department expansion

Gold Coast University Hospital Emergency Department (ED) was extended with a modular building connected to the main facility. This expansion provides 10 new treatment spaces in a culturally safe environment, helps to improve ambulance offloading, as well as an improved patient experience for presentations which do not require acute care or resuscitation. Funded through the Care4Qld strategy, this space is used to treat minor injuries and illnesses and allows patients to be cleared from the emergency treatment queue efficiently, increasing Gold Coast Health's flexibility for disaster response.

In the first two weeks, 442 patients (an average of 30 patients per day) were treated in Minor Injuries/Illness. The average length of stay for these patients during the two-week period was two hours 40 minutes. Data shows that when compared to the two-week period before the extension opened, a comparable cohort of patients had an average length of stay of five hours 24 mins. This equates to a saving of 1208 hours in ED over the two-week period.

Crisis Stabilisation Unit

As part of the ongoing redevelopment of Robina Hospital, the new Crisis Stabilisation Unit (CSU) opened in August 2021. The unit supports mental health consumers to access an alternative to EDs during a crisis, transforming their care experience and offering a more suitable environment for treatment. The CSU's name in the local Yugambeh language is *Yalburro' angabah* - which means *a place to become happy*. The name was gifted to Gold Coast Health by the Yugambeh language speaking people.

- The CSU has 12 chairs and access to eight short-stay beds with 24/7 crisis support.
- It has a comfortable, home-like environment with clinicians working hand-in-hand with lived experience peer workers to provide the best care for our consumers.
- Since opening, the CSU has helped 1908 people in crisis, with up to 240 patients per month diverted directly from Gold Coast Health EDs to the CSU. This saves time spent in ED by about 14,888 hours, or 60 hours per day.
- Despite increasing mental health demand, the CSU has led to an average length of stay reduction of mental health consumers in ED by 35 per cent.
- The service transforms the consumer's experience and reduces the need for admissions. On average, 81.7 per cent of CSU consumers can be discharged home, with only a small percentage requiring admission.
- The program was one of the Future Focus initiatives managed and monitored under the Transformation agenda.
- The CSU is a key component of the *Gold Coast Crisis Reform Strategy*, which includes:
 - two Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) co-responder vehicles to support consumers in the community
 - a Queensland Police Service (QPS) co-responder initiative with QPS four days a week
 - 1300 telephone number providing support to the community 24 hours a day, seven days a week
 - a 24-hour-a-day, seven-days-a-week crisis coordination centre that manages referrals and diverts to the CSU, where appropriate
 - two Safe Space initiatives commissioned with the Gold Coast Primary Health Network under the umbrella of the Joint Regional Plan to provide another alternative to ED. The two services operate in the evenings and on weekends.

The unit is complemented by the refurbished Waratah mental health unit, providing eight short-stay pathway beds for consumers requiring a stay for up to 72 hours.

Backing our frontline services by delivering highly reliable, equitable, world-class care – Always

Focus areas included planning for and securing resources for the future, as well as supporting our staff to build a culturally safe, healthy, and inspirational workforce. Examples of our work towards these areas include:

23-Hour Surgical Unit

Robina Hospital expanded its services to include a 23-hour ward for short-stay elective surgery patients. The overnight unit has cared for more than 1330 patients in its first year of operation, using a model of care that adapted to meet community needs. The ward cares for a mix of pre and post-operative elective surgery patients, as well as emergency patients, and can take patients for a night before transferring them to longer stay units.

Workplace Health and Safety Ambassador Program

Gold Coast Health received a grant from Queensland Health in November 2021 to trial the Workplace Health and Safety Ambassador Program in our Mental Health unit. It will be assessed over a 12-month period. The program incorporates a non-traditional security role that provides a customer-focused liaison service and utilises pro-active engagement of patients and visitors to improve the patient experience and to prevent and/or reduce aggressive or disruptive behaviour.

Continued investment in Adolescent and Young Adult Services

Gold Coast Health's Adolescent and Young Adult Services (AYAS) expanded to include a medical lead and additional nursing, allied health and administration staff for a new day program. As medical management for childhood-related conditions and diseases improves, there is an associated increase in the number of children with life-long and often life-limiting chronic diseases surviving into adolescence and adulthood. The health needs in this group are diverse and complex, including mental and behavioural disorders, sexual health concerns, drug and alcohol problems, obesity and eating disorders, and chronic medical conditions. Many adolescent conditions have long hospital stays, require multidisciplinary input, and consume high health costs.

Waijungbah Jarjums, caring for First Nations families

Waijungbah Jarjums is a service co-designed with First Nations families from the local community. It is a continuity of care model which aims to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families to have equity in access to culturally safe, high-quality care. The service employs 23 staff members, with 83 per cent Identified roles. The Waijungbah Jarjums service is the first of its kind in Australia to incorporate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander 'Birthing on Country' and 'First 1000 Days Australia' models of care. The cohort of clients is 63 per cent first-time mothers. New initiatives include educational child health drop-in and play groups, introduction of prescribing for midwives, health worker upskilling with phlebotomy, commencement of social workers, a practice development midwife and acupuncturist.

Waijungbah Jarjums is seeing more women with complexities of pregnancy, diabetes, and mental illness, leading to an increased rate of pre-term births. There has been an increase in spontaneous vaginal births and a decrease in caesarean section and assisted births. Inductions decreased from 40 to 29.5 per cent.

Child Health has had excellent results in increasing breastfeeding rates, with 90 per cent of babies in the service being exclusively breastfed.

Child Health had significantly reduced capacity in 2021 due to COVID-19. The recruitment of an experienced Child Health Clinical Nurse Consultant along with one full-time equivalent (FTE) Clinical Nurse and one FTE Registered Child Health Nurses has greatly improved capacity. Further positions are being recruited as 33 per cent of referrals are currently being waitlisted due to the service reaching capacity.

Backing our frontline services by driving future-focused change

Workforce Reform Program

The Gold Coast Health Workforce Reform Program responds to current and forecasted growth and demand and supports effective models of care while maximising the efficiency of the health service. During the reporting period, a series of workshops and consultation was undertaken about administration workforce reform.

Mental Health Service workforce plan

Work has commenced in each service line on developing a strategic workforce plan and succession plan for Mental Health and Support Services (MHSS). The strategic workplace plan will identify workforce, capability and skill requirements needed for current and future operational models. It will also ensure that we build an inclusive workforce that is representative of our consumers.

We have introduced the use of talent pools to develop a pipeline of applicants for registered and clinical nurses, psychologists, occupational therapists, and social workers. Additionally, Gold Coast Health continues to invest in and support student placements across all disciplines as well as taking an active role in developing partnerships with universities.

A supportive environment for staff

Gold Coast Health's Employee Networks are voluntary groups of staff who come together based on shared identity, interests, and life experiences. These groups provide support, arrange events, discuss issues, raise awareness and advocate for change so that we have a more inclusive work environment. We have established employee networks across the following diversity groups:

- Women's Network (Gender Equality)
- Multicultural Network
- Veterans Network
- Rainbow Alliance Network
- Abilities (Disability) Network.

To provide ongoing support in creating a more diverse and inclusive workplace, Gold Coast Health launched the world-class SBS Inclusion Program to give staff core skills and knowledge around inclusion in general, and more specifically, around different diversity dimensions – gender, age, disability, LGBTIQ+ and cultural diversity. More information can be found on page 44.

Promoting Professional Accountability

Promoting Professional Accountability (PPA) makes it easy for any staff member to flag unprofessional behaviour that may put patient, staff, or visitor safety at risk. If it is not safe, possible, or effective to speak up in the moment, PPA enables staff to submit a report.

Trained peer messengers initiate an informal coffee chat to provide non-judgemental feedback about what has been seen or heard so the person has an opportunity to reflect and modify their behaviour.

In the three years the program has been running at Gold Coast Health, staff have provided 195 pieces of feedback (about five per month). All reporting is anonymous and, in most cases, once the coffee chat occurs, no further reports are made. PPA works in conjunction with our existing HR processes. A total of 70 per cent of health professionals reported a gentle reminder was all they needed to self-correct potentially unsafe behaviour.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

Gold Coast Health is committed to improving health outcomes to close the gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We contribute to fulfil statewide reporting requirements by submitting bi-annual reports detailing our progress against key performance indicators and other relevant activities. Our work supports the Queensland Government's *Making Tracks Towards Closing the Gap in Health Outcomes* along with Gold Coast Health's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Capability Plan and Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan.

Gold Coast Health's commitment to increase the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees to 3.5 per cent by 2022 continued to be supported by the Waijungbah Jarjums maternity and child health service. This service increased and now employs 18 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander midwives, student midwives, nurses, health workers, social workers and administrative staff (an increase from 13 in 2021). During 2021–2022, Gold Coast Health made advances towards improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes with the exemplary efforts of the Waijungbah Jarjums service, which supplied care to 129 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers. More information can be found on page 14.

First Nations Health Equity Strategy

To meet the legislated requirements outlined in the *Hospital and Health Boards (Health Equity Strategies) Amendment Regulation 2021*, Gold Coast Health partnered with Kalwun Development Corporation (as the relevant Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled health organisation) to co-design the *Gold Coast Health First Nations Health Equity Strategy 2022-2025*. The strategy details local activities and key performance indicators to improve First Nations health and wellbeing and the collaborative actions to be taken to achieve First Nations health parity by 2031. The strategy complements the *South East Queensland (SEQ) Health Equity Strategy First Nations Health Equity Strategy: A regional and systems-focused approach to closing the health gap by 2031* of which Gold Coast Health is a member and signatory to. The Gold Coast Primary Health Network is partnering with Gold Coast Health and Kalwun to develop and implement plans and deliver the strategy.

Reconciliation

Consultation and collaboration are key to reconciliation. Gold Coast Health is committed to a new way of working together with the local First Nations community, delivering real outcomes and lasting change through a genuine partnership approach of co-design, co-ownership, and co-implementation. The voices, leadership and lived experiences of First Nations peoples are driving the health equity and reconciliation agendas.

The *Gold Coast Health Reconciliation Statement* was launched on 31 May 2022, following significant co-design, collaboration, and Board support. Since that time, there have been substantial actions and outcomes that support each of the eight commitments in the statement. Work continues, in the spirit of reconciliation, in accordance with each aspect of the statement. This work is complemented by the *Gold Coast Health First Nations Health Equity Strategy 2022-2025* (due for publication by 30 September 2022).

Gold Coast Health engaged Riki Salam (We Are 27 Creative) to capture the organisation's cultural aspirations in a bespoke artwork. Unveiled at the launch of Gold Coast Health's Reconciliation Statement, elements from the *Yanbalehla karulbo yuwanu*, which means *walking together in kindness/compassion*, appear at the entrance of our major facilities, along reception areas, and on the new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing website. The specific elements are widely used to represent our corporate values.

The *Yanbalehla karulbo yuwanu* artwork has been warmly welcomed by the Gold Coast Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community. The artwork symbolises that this place is a welcoming environment, a place where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people can feel safe, comfortable, accepted, and confident that they will be respected, listened to, and well cared for.

Our community-based and hospital-based services

The Gold Coast Health catchment area takes in one of Australia's most iconic holiday destinations. Like our beautiful city, our community is also diverse in culture, age, race, socio-economic status, and health care needs. We care for 665,515 people who live in the Gold Coast region and northern New South Wales, as well as approximately 11.1 million (pre-COVID-19) visitors each year.

Gold Coast Health delivers a broad range of secondary and tertiary health services across our three hospital sites at Gold Coast University Hospital, Robina Hospital and Varsity Lakes Day Hospital. Services include surgery, trauma, paediatric, general and specialist medicine, maternity and intensive neonatal care, aged and dementia care, emergency medicine, intensive care, cardiology, mental health, oral health, outpatients, environmental health, public health services, and more.

We also deliver a wide range of services in diverse community settings – in our health precincts, community centres, schools, residential aged-care facilities, correctional centres, and in the home. These services include post-birth midwifery visits, home-based palliative care, hospital in the home programs, and school dental health appointments. Gold Coast University Hospital is the city's premier tertiary-level facility providing world-class tertiary hospital care, with more than 70 per cent of private rooms. It is located in the Gold Coast Health and Knowledge Precinct together with Griffith University and Gold Coast Private Hospital.

Robina Hospital is a major regional health facility and serves as a patient base for emergency, medical, palliative care, and mental health. It is also home to the Clinical Education and Research Centre, a joint project between Queensland Health and Bond University's Faculty of Health Sciences and Medicine.

Varsity Lakes Day Hospital features six theatres for endoscopy, plastics, orthopaedic and other surgery, and women's health clinics.

Community service redesign

Community services redesign initiatives have helped to manage costs and deliver patient, system and staff benefits. Emergency Department (ED) presentations have been avoided and the quality of outpatient referrals has been improved resulting in a smoother process for patients, a simpler system, and better communication with our partners in general practice which has been reflected in increased GP and staff satisfaction measures this year.

Benefits include:

- **Single point of entry**
This initiative consolidated six possible referral points into one, simplifying the process for patients and bringing in-scope community programs together. Key outcomes included a single point of entry for seven community programs resulting in a 10 per cent reduction in declined referrals to community services, and improved GP communication due to the introduction of a simplified referral pathway.
- **Discharge support**
A seven-day service, known as Multi-disciplinary Avoidance and Post-acute services (MAPS) was launched in September 2021, and realised approximately \$943,000 in avoided costs in its first three months of operation.
- **Telehealth**
Telehealth use doubled this financial year with 32 per cent of services delivered via virtual technology (video and telephone).
- **GP advice line**
The introduction of a GP advice line resulted in over half of the calls received during the pilot avoiding an ED presentation or an outpatient referral. All GP calls were responded to within 48 hours and 85 per cent of GPs were satisfied or very satisfied with the service.

Car parking concessions

Car parking concessions at Queensland Health hospital facilities improve access and affordability of car parking spaces to eligible patients and their carers.

In 2021–2022, Gold Coast Health issued 33,347 one-day concession passes and 29 five-day concession passes. The cost of concessions incurred by Gold Coast Health was \$161,315.

Gold Coast Hospital Foundation partners with Gold Coast Health

Gold Coast Hospital Foundation (the Foundation) is a community-minded health charity committed to helping children and adults across the Gold Coast receive the best health care when it's needed most. As a purpose-based not-for-profit organisation, the Foundation relies on community and corporate donations to fund the delivery of vital extras that would not otherwise be available across Gold Coast Health.

These vital support programs include the Cancer Patient Transport Service, Renal Patient Transport Service, Emergency Accommodation Service, the purchase of medical equipment, funding hospital-led health research, improving hospital facilities and patient spaces, and providing scholarships for Gold Coast Health staff.

An aligned approach and close partnership with Gold Coast Health helps support the sickest and most vulnerable in the community through better patient care, early diagnosis, enhanced treatment options and family support.

Despite the challenges of operating in a pandemic, the Foundation continued to grow its positive impact in the community during the reporting period by raising more than \$2.4 million to support approximately 100,000 patients, families, and Gold Coast Health staff.

The significant initiatives and projects delivered by the Foundation were made possible thanks to the overwhelming generosity and commitment of its valued supporters, corporate partners, sponsors, community groups and individuals in the local community.

- The Cancer Patient Transport Service made more than 5400 trips across the Gold Coast to support patients undergoing cancer treatment by providing stress-free, comfortable transport to and from their home to hospital.
- A dedicated transport service supporting the most at-risk renal patients provided transport to and from Gold Coast public renal treatment facilities. The Renal Patient Transport Service helped more than 95 local renal patients in the reporting period.
- The Emergency Accommodation Service continued to support families of patients receiving lifesaving treatment in all critical care units at Gold Coast Health with 318 nights of emergency accommodation provided close to the hospital.
- The Foundation successfully secured funding for 39 wish list projects to benefit the care of newborns, children and adults in hospital. Donations from the community made it possible to purchase medical equipment, including an ECMO Trainer, Bladder Scanner and a Giraffe Omnibed Carestation.
- Five hospital facilities were improved, including a full upgrade of the Children's Outpatients waiting room including interactive and educational play zones, toys and resources, new wall art and furniture. This was the largest ever refurbishment project undertaken by the Foundation.
- Twelve Gold Coast Health staff were awarded nursing and midwifery scholarships thanks to the Foundation's partnership with Professor Ged Williams.
- There are 1195 Gold Coast Health employees signed up to Gold Coast Hospital Foundation's Workplace Giving program to give regular donations through their fortnightly pay. The Foundation was also recognised in the top six most outstanding workplace giving programs in Australia and

received Highly Commended in the Most Innovative Charity and Employer Partnership category at the 2021 Workplace Giving Excellence Awards.

- Gold Coast Hospital Foundation raised a record \$181,139 in just 12 hours at its annual Giving Day in May 2022. The Foundation's biggest fundraiser was made possible thanks to 696 community donations, 20 matched donors and 70 volunteers.
- The Foundation introduced a new golf day fundraiser named Mindful on the Green, which saw nearly 90 participants and eight corporate sponsors tee off for mental health and raise more than \$17,000 for vital mental health facilities, equipment, and services.

Gold Coast Hospital Foundation works in close partnership with Gold Coast Health to align with the Queensland Government's objectives for the community, to better support vulnerable people in the community and safeguard the health system to deliver the best possible outcomes for patients and their families. By funding research, support programs, equipment, facility improvements, and scholarships for health professionals, and through the Foundation's strategic themes of impact, sustainability, investment, culture, engagement, and trust, the Foundation supports the focus of safeguarding health and backing frontline services.

Non-financial performance

Targets and challenges

Target:

Drive future-focused change 3.4 - Continue to attract, train and export world-class professionals who seek to enhance local, national, and international service delivery and drive our future-focused agenda.

Challenge:

Population growth, ongoing effects of the pandemic, border closures and staff shortages continued to impact recruitment of staff to critical roles.

Outcome:

International recruitment

Gold Coast Health led the state-wide United Kingdom (UK) nursing recruitment drive for base-grade registered nurses and midwives with a minimum of two years' experience in a specialty. Delegates from Gold Coast Health joined seven HHS and travelled to the UK to attend the Nursing Times Career Fair and promote living and working in Queensland. More than 600 applications were received from registered nurses from the UK, Turkey, Spain, New Zealand and every state and territory in Australia.

Infection Control Traineeships

The Gold Coast Health Infection Control department introduced a six-month traineeship program for two cohorts of trainees. Two nurses per cohort successfully completed the six-month traineeship in 2021 and 2022, with the third cohort currently underway. The post-graduate level program was developed in consultation with Griffith University and combines theory-based learning along with the practical experience of working in the Infection Control Department.

Target:

Make the best use of our resources 2.1 - Continue to grow, develop, and reward a capable, culturally safe, healthy, and inspirational workforce who aspire to be the best health service in Australia.

Challenge:

Develop staff education, compassion, and cultural awareness to reflect an environment of inclusivity and cultural awareness for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and consumers.

Outcome:

Gold Coast Health provides cultural safety specialist training and strategies, research, and expert advice that centres and elevates Indigenous people's strength, experience, capability, and humanity as the oldest continuous culture in the world. The focus of cultural safety and anti-racism training is to achieve health equity and provide culturally safe care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples that is patient-centred, free from racism, discrimination, and bias. Achievements include:

- 1459 Gold Coast Health staff received cultural safety and anti-racism training. COVID-19 restrictions affected the delivery of some sessions during the reporting period.
- The Yanbalehla Karulbo Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Practice Program (CPP) team trained 1,336 staff. 29 sessions were held, including eight requested sessions for clinical areas such as medical interns, the Coomera vaccination clinic and newly qualified nurses.
- Award-winning Courageous Conversations About Race (CCAR) training has been delivered to 101 staff and community members over 10 sessions. 19 staff attended the Courageous Conversations About Race Beyond Diversity II training; the first session ever held in Australia.
- Gold Coast Health was identified as an exemplar model of care in the *Making Tracks towards health equity with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples SEQ Consultation Report* as well

as the Discussion Paper. We were also acknowledged by the Diversity Council of Australia *Racism at Work Report* as a leading practice example of how an organisation can build racial literacy.

- Gold Coast Health is represented on the Tier 3 First Nations Health Workforce Committee which is working to co-design a *Queensland First Nations Health Workforce Strategy for Action* for Queensland's health system. We are working in partnership with the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC), HHSs and Queensland Health's Clinical Chiefs, with support from other health, education, and training stakeholders.

Target:

Deliver world-class care – *always* 1.2 - Deliver health care services and a work environment that is safe, responsive, inclusive, and culturally appropriate for all diverse groups.

Challenge:

Continue to build a culturally safe health care service that meets the needs of the local community and works to close the gap on health care inequality for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers.

Outcome:

Gold Coast Health is working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers, carers, families, and businesses to improve the health outcomes and cultural safety of our service. Achievements include:

- Development of the Gold Coast Mental Health and Specialist Services (GCMHSS) Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee, in partnership with the GCMHSS, a first of its kind.
- Development of the *Binangma Gulgan for the Cultural Care of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders* publication, for staff in the Robina Hospital Crisis Stabilisation Unit.
- Creation of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consultation committee to assist the CSU and advise our greater mental health service.
- Production and installation of 55 Aboriginal artwork decals and three canvas prints at Gold Coast Health facilities in response to consumer feedback received from Community focus groups.
- Co-design of the *Gold Coast Health First Nations Health Equity Strategy 2022-2025* with consumers and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health care providers.
- Completion of 16 Community consultations with 458 unique participants (aged 18 or over) and a total reach of 2400 consumers.

Target:

Deliver world-class care – *always* 1.4 - Co-design compassionate, person-centred services in collaboration with our people, patients, partners, and stakeholders.

Challenge:

Sustain a person-centred approach to health care and include key stakeholders on strategic and planning committees and working groups.

Outcome:

Consumer Advisory Group

Health consumer representation is facilitated by the Gold Coast Health Consumer Advisory Group (CAG). The CAG has 17 members who sit on 28 Gold Coast Health strategic, planning, operational and clinical committees. The CAG provide consumer insight into areas such as Clinical Governance, Health Literacy, Diversity and Inclusion, Voluntary Assisted Dying, and Infrastructure and Planning.

Consumer engagement at Gold Coast Health continues to shape service delivery to better meet consumer and community needs and adds value to patient, carer, family, clinician, and community experiences of health care. CAG members actively collaborate with staff on initiatives including refining the Food Services menu, medical intern health literacy training, local area needs assessment, and telehealth. Consumer-led projects include:

- **Hidden disability lanyards**

Advocated for by the CAG, hidden disability sunflower lanyards have been implemented at Gold Coast University Hospital to help identify consumers and their carers who require additional support due to a hidden disability. In collaboration with the Gold Coast Hospital Foundation, a grant was received to fund this initiative and the pilot program commenced in May 2022, with positive feedback received. The lanyards are in use in the Children's Emergency Department and Paediatric Department, with the intention to extend their use throughout Gold Coast Health following success of the initial pilot program.

- **Health Literacy**

Health literacy is one of four strategic priorities highlighted in the *Gold Coast Health Consumer and Community Engagement Strategy 2020-2023*. Consumers have worked alongside the Health Literacy committee from conceptualisation, with CAG members contributing to the orientation agenda for junior doctors each year. The CAG initiated the 'Ask Me' campaign which supports a person, or substitute decision-maker, to make informed decisions about treatment options and prompts care providers to invite questions.

Target:

Deliver world-class care – *always* 1.4 - Co-design compassionate, person-centred services in collaboration with our people, patients, partners, and stakeholders.

Challenge:

Support continuous improvement to birth outcomes, increasing choice for consumers and capacity of GPs.

Outcome:

Partnering with consumers for respectful maternity care

Gold Coast Health launched a Respectful Maternity Care program where midwives, obstetricians and consumers engage in working groups on topics including induction of labour, prevention of serious perineal tears and appropriate oxytocin management, water birth, and vaginal birth after caesarean (VBAC). Outcomes include:

- enhanced client education and information around induction of labour and VBAC
- health Informatics assisting with the development of an online induction of labour booking-in program
- evidence-based guidelines around warm water immersion incorporating audit and reporting tools.

Partnering with our GPs

The Gold Coast Health GP Maternity Alignment Program (GCGPMAP) is a partnership between Gold Coast University Hospital and Gold Coast Primary Health Network to support local GPs in providing antenatal care to women within the primary care setting. The program supports women who choose to have their pregnancy managed by their local GP and allows GPs to work within a supportive shared care framework with obstetric and midwifery teams. This program has been developed with the support of Mater, Metro North and Metro South health services.

Target:

Deliver world-class care – *always* 1.3 - Implement innovative service delivery models that maximise our capacity to respond to health care demand – including hospital, community, home, and virtual care.

Challenge:

Continue to provide world-class care working to reduce hospitalisations and length of stay.

Outcome:**Hospital in the Home service expands treatable conditions**

Hospital in the Home (HITH) treats patients in their permanent or temporary residence for acute conditions requiring clinical governance, monitoring and/or input that would otherwise be managed in a traditional inpatient hospital bed. HITH can provide patients with greater choice in their care, improve access to health services, and equal or better patient care outcomes while minimising hospital admissions.

In 2021-2022, the HITH service expanded the number of conditions and kinds of care it provides. This included the addition of wound care, drain management, diuretic titration, and methylprednisolone management. In the past six months, HITH has treated over 491 patients. This equates to a total of 4419 bed days saved in hospital.

Improving access to specialist palliative care services in aged care facilities

In Queensland, the Gold Coast has the largest population of people aged over 65 years. There is a growing need for palliative care in Australian Residential Aged Care Facilities (RACF) due to an aging population with complex care needs and high mortality. In response, Gold Coast Health formed a Specialist Palliative Care in Aged Care (SPACE) team to initiative palliative care needs rounds in RACF. Needs Rounds combine triaging, anticipatory patient-centred care, and case-based education. Pilot studies have been shown to improve symptoms at end of life and reduce length of hospital stay for aged care residents.

By July 2021, the SPACE service was operative, partnering with 59 RACF to increase the capacity of RACF staff and general practitioners through training, education, and support programs. By improving equitable access to specialist palliative care support, the SPACE program has reduced hospitalisations, length-of-stay for RACF residents at end of life and increased the number of residents who receive end of life care in their place of choice. The sustainable model of care also allows for advance care planning conversations and documentation, leading to better safety and quality end-of-life care for residents.

Remote patient monitoring

Remote patient monitoring of cardiac patients has been implemented to help clinicians at Gold Coast Health manage their patient's health conditions proactively and call patients in for treatment if issues are detected. Multiple patients have cardiac implantable electronic devices, such as loop recorders, pacemakers, defibrillators, and cardiac synchronisation devices. Clinicians can treat patients in the home instead of admitting them to hospital. It allows clinicians to predict when there's going to be a problem, using devices before the patient ends up in the ED or needs to be admitted. Up to 500 patients are expected to be implanted with remote monitoring-compatible devices this year.

Target:

Deliver world-class care – *always* 1.3 - Implement innovative service delivery models that maximise our capacity to respond to health care demand – including hospital, community, home, and virtual care.

Challenge:

In June 2021, the Department of Children, Youth Justice and Multicultural Affairs (DCYMA) formally notified Gold Coast Health of the intention to cease funding for the Home Visiting Program (HVP), which targets vulnerable families within the Gold Coast community.

Outcome:

Gold Coast Health and the Department of Health recognised the potential for significant clinical risk associated with cessation of this service providing early identification, early intervention, and parental education for vulnerable families of children < 2 years of age. Funding was provided to continue the program after a comprehensive review.

- service provided to 743 individual children (724 families)
- 3302 appointments completed, including 2813 home visits and 494 clinic-based or other community child health services that encourage families engagement in wider health services to build parental capacity
- the average active patient load was 314, aligning with the target of 30 active clients per 1.0 FTE recommended for sustainable safe clinical practice service (historically 50-70 clients)
- the most significant vulnerability risk identified was parental mental health, present in 49% of families
- common vulnerability risk factors present in families included domestic violence 18%, financial hardship 15%, parental alcohol or drug use 11.6%
- 45% of families had 3 or more active vulnerability risk factors, supporting the significant complexity of this cohort
- service delivery in the period was impacted by the uncertainty of ongoing permanent funding, resulting in difficulty maintaining full staffing resources.

Target:

Deliver world-class care – *always* 1.3 - Implement innovative service delivery models that maximise our capacity to respond to health care demand – including hospital, community, home, and virtual care.

Challenge:

Increase access to orthopaedic specialists to those who need them most and provide a quality service to those who may not require surgical intervention.

Outcome:

Primary Contact Hand Therapy (PCHT) is an initiative developed in response to increasing demand in Orthopaedics. It aims to address the elective waitlist by commencing conservative management on patients where clinically appropriate. The treatment is delivered by Allied Health primary contact hand therapists instead of an orthopaedic surgeon. Since its implementation in 2018, patient recorded experience measures (PREMs) have recognised a high satisfaction rate among patients in therapists' knowledge and the treatment they receive from therapists rather than from a doctor. Results include:

- 52 per cent reduction in long waits for hand and upper limb conditions
- 32 per cent of patients seen have been discharged to their GP without requiring orthopaedic input
- 54 additional new orthopaedic occasions of service per month have been created because of the post-operative and fracture clinic streams of PCHT.

Target:

Deliver world-class care – *always* 1.5 - Embed research, research translation and evidenced-based practice to deliver optimal health outcomes for patients.

Challenge:

Increase the number of health service and clinical research projects, and the number of staff engaged in research and education using evidence-based practice.

Outcome

A total of 67 new research projects started during the period, with \$2.69 million awarded (\$1.7 million from commercial partners and \$1 million from government, not-for-profit organisations, and universities). This is a reduction from the previous period. Most research activities were supported by new and existing partnerships, including 11 commercial companies, nine universities, four not-for-profit organisations, and six government (including other hospital and health services).

In addition, 11 collaborative research groups are active within Gold Coast Health, covering a diverse range of research areas, including cancer, infectious diseases, mental health, orthopaedics, emergency care, pharmacy, allied health, maternity and children's health, and patient and family-centred care. This is an increase of one from the previous reporting period. There are approximately 16 research joint appointments in place across Gold Coast Health with Griffith University or Bond University (excluding dual appointments).

The Clinical Trials Service continued to provide support to 30 principal investigators across 17 departments with 58 active clinical trials. The number of departments active in clinical trials has grown by four, and the number of active trials has grown by 10, in comparison to the previous reporting period. Of the active trials, 53 per cent are commercial trials.

Our Collaborative Research Grant scheme, supported by the Gold Coast Hospital Foundation and Bond, Griffith, and Southern Cross universities, provided funding towards seven high-quality collaborative research projects totalling \$537,800.

Reflecting the high-quality research being undertaken at Gold Coast Health, there have been 399 publications from July 2021 to June 2022, an increase of 13 per cent compared to the previous year. These publications included research studies that described implementing or evaluating new interventions or changes in practice that led to improved health outcomes.

Target:

Drive future-focused change 3.2 - Lead and develop a Gold Coast 'one-system' for health care by partnering with, and enabling, other sectors, agencies, partners and providers.

Challenge:

There is a need to prioritise access to emergency services for those who need it most and so community health needs are being met.

Outcome:

An innovative approach to procuring services was introduced between our health service and private hospital operators to address ongoing challenges around service provision. The Interactive Competitive Dialogue (ICD) process includes structured workshops to detail challenges, so private operators can hear the problems and propose solutions to prioritise and manage growing demand.

The first trial involved Emergency Department Load Share (EDLS), to address unprecedented presentations to public emergency departments. Rather than patients coming to the public hospital for assessment before being transferred elsewhere, they are now diverted to a private emergency department, when clinically appropriate. It involves a detailed decision-making process between the hospitals and the Queensland Ambulance Service before a patient is deemed suitable for the scheme.

EDLS began as a trial in October 2021 with Gold Coast Private Hospital and ten patients per day and expanded to John Flynn and Pindara Private Hospitals in January 2022. Up to 30 patients a day are now

diverted to and treated by one of the three private hospitals as a public patient. They can be admitted if required and receive end-to-end care.

Target:

Drive future-focused change 3.6 - Implement a Gold Coast Digital Transformation agenda which embraces new technology and innovations to meet the needs of our community.

Challenge:

The concepts and ideas to transform the organisation outstrips our capacity to deliver so a robust process is required to consistently develop, monitor, deliver and evaluate initiatives.

Outcome:

This year features the fifth Future Focus Showcase, designed to shine a spotlight on Transformation initiatives funded by the health service to address specific health care challenges. Showcases give the entire workforce an opportunity to engage by encouraging them to provide feedback and input into initiatives.

Future Focus initiatives, collectively known as the Transformation Program, are designed and tested through a rigorous and disciplined process. The Transformation Program has four core ambitions to guide transformational change:

1. Best in class clinical demand management

Lead the way in customising and integrating our service delivery to the unique needs of our patients and community.

2. Clinical teaming and innovation

Deliver the best value health care through innovative care models and new ways of teaming.

3. Value added corporate functions

Re-position our corporate functions as value-adding services.

4. A digitally enabled health service

Leverage digital and data to transform the way we work.

Transformation Delivery advises and oversees the design, delivery, transition and sustainability of transformational activities and digital projects. This year, the program has overseen more than 20 initiatives introduced into the program with 10 currently in delivery. Examples of completed initiatives include Primary Contact Hand Therapy, Crisis Stabilisation Unit and the Refer Your Patient website.

Target:

Drive future-focused change 3.6 - Implement a Gold Coast Digital Transformation agenda which embraces new technology and innovations to meet the needs of our community.

Challenge:

The delivery of the *Gold Coast Health Strategic Plan 2020–2024* required a comprehensive complementary digital plan to drive transformation, manage demand and improve performance.

Outcome:

The *Gold Coast Health Digital Strategic Plan and Roadmap 2021-2024 (D24)* communicates a vision and defines areas of focus to guide our strategic thinking and seek out partnerships to complete the program of work required to meet the needs of our organisation.

The focus of D24 is to deliver digital transformation that will improve patient care, patient experience, staff experience, and increase overall health system efficiency and productivity. D24 is aligned to and drives the objectives of the *Gold Coast Health Strategic Plan 2020-2024*.

Five focus areas have been identified as the program of work for the next three years:

1. Advanced Insights

Enabling clinical practice improvement, research, and innovation through the use of our rich data assets.

Building on existing investments in data management, this focus area will modernise our existing data platform to leverage cloud capabilities and services, build enriched data sets and models to support workflow automation and machine learning efforts.

2. Digital Liberation

Using digital solutions to replace or enhance manual workflows.

Gold Coast Health has a significant number of manual workflows, managing both clinical and non-clinical processes. Digital Liberation seeks to streamline manual workflows, optimise clinical and non-clinical administrative tasks and provide single points of interaction for staff and patients in accessing information.

3. Digital Literacy and Design

Making systems intuitive to use and providing the right education to staff and patients.

Human-centred design and support will increase digital literacy and realise the full potential of our digital investment. Digital Literacy and Design will deliver platforms using good design to enhance a high-quality user interface experience across devices and incorporate education opportunities to further improve digital literacy for consumers and staff.

4. Virtual Health care

Using technology to create more options in how health services are delivered.

The complexity and cost of health care is increasing, and patients are demanding more tailored and personalised care. Virtual health care reconsiders the traditional delivery models and provides innovative patient care modalities which provide alternative options for interacting with their care team.

5. Digital Foundations

Leveraging digital capacity and improving digital infrastructure.

Gold Coast Health maintains a complex technical environment. A solid but agile approach to digital infrastructure and platforms is required to enable transformative digital delivery. Digital Foundations aims to deliver platforms and technologies for the long term to provide a solid technology core to leverage future opportunities.

Managing strategic risks

With the rapid growth of our local population and extreme growth in our northern suburbs, Gold Coast Health continues to experience an increasing demand for public health services on the Gold Coast.

We continue to adopt a transformational culture that encourages agility, innovation, and rapid knowledge translation to ensure health care delivery that meets community needs and ensures patient safety. This includes prioritising and balancing financial resources as health care demand grows and to respond to emerging or unforeseen local or global challenges. We must also optimise and grow our infrastructure to meet growing demand so that we can provide equitable and reliable access to health care.

We continue to develop our strategic opportunities including optimising governance, systems, processes, and models of care to underpin organisational resilience, sustainability, and reputation. We maintain a focus on accessing, attracting, retaining, and investing in a high-performing, diverse workforce to ensure our capacity and capability to provide world-class health care.

We also continue to maximise collaborative 'one-system' partnerships (across sectors, agencies, partners, and providers) that optimise access for our diverse community to drive equitable and improved health outcomes for the Gold Coast population.