

Optimising the allied health workforce for best care and best value

A 10-year Strategy 2019-2029



Optimising the allied health workforce for best care and best value A 10-year Strategy 2019-2029

Published by the State of Queensland (Queensland Health), February 2019



This document is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 3.0 Australia licence.
To view a copy of this licence, visit creativecommons.org/licenses/by/3.0/au
© State of Queensland (Queensland Health) **2019**

You are free to copy, communicate and adapt the work, as long as you attribute the State of Queensland (Queensland Health).

For more information contact:

Allied Health Professions' Office of Queensland, Department of Health, PO Box 2368, Fortitude Valley BC Qld 4006, email allied_health_advisory@health.qld.gov.au, phone 07 3328 9298.

An electronic version of this document is available at
<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/ahwac/>

Disclaimer:

The content presented in this publication is distributed by the Queensland Government as an information source only. The State of Queensland makes no statements, representations or warranties about the accuracy, completeness or reliability of any information contained in this publication. The State of Queensland disclaims all responsibility and all liability (including without limitation for liability in negligence) for all expenses, losses, damages and costs you might incur as a result of the information being inaccurate or incomplete in any way, and for any reason reliance was placed on such information.



Allied health is committed to Queensland Health's vision that
**'By 2026 Queenslanders will be among the
healthiest people in the world'**

(My health, Queensland's future: Advancing health 2026).

A message from the Chief Allied Health Officer

The allied health workforce plays a valuable role in delivering effective healthcare for Queenslanders. This strategy has been developed through a broad consultation process with key partners and stakeholders from the public and private sectors. Feedback from the allied health, nursing and medical workforce, professional associations and consumer representatives has contributed to its development.

The document sets out the overarching vision, strategic priorities and associated initiatives for building the future of allied health for Queensland Health over the next 10 years. It will be reviewed regularly in collaboration with internal and external stakeholders to ensure that the initiatives delivered over the life of the strategy remain relevant.

Over the last 10 years, modest but consistent investments by Queensland Health have assisted in optimising the contribution of the allied health workforce to client care, embedding expanded scope of practice roles and models, generating high quality research and evidence and developing clinical education to support workforce capability.

Key achievements include:

- Allied health workforce reform and redesign initiatives that have contributed to reduced waiting times and increased access to care, reduced duplication, enhanced integration of services, and improved client outcomes and satisfaction. These initiatives have been aligned with Queensland Health strategies and have assisted hospital and health services to meet key performance indicators, including emergency department and specialist outpatient waiting time targets.
- A new Health Practitioner structure was implemented, supporting structured career progression for allied health professionals through recognition of increasing levels of responsibility across clinical and management streams.
- Critical expansion of allied health leadership and workforce development support roles that have led and facilitated service improvements and reform.
- Investment provided for education and training initiatives by the *Health Practitioners (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No.1) 2007*, has ensured that health services have been able to maintain support for, and meet rising demands associated with pre-entry and new graduate education, and has provided for targeted training programs to enable expanded scope of practice.
- Growth in research capacity and outputs have been achieved through investment in research fellows and research funding provided by the *Health Practitioners (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No.1) 2007*.

As outlined in *Queensland Health Allied Health: The last 10 years – achievements and ongoing challenges* the next 10 years will see unique challenges and changes for the delivery of healthcare due to increasing demand for services, workforce availability, escalating costs and the rapidly expanding integration of technology into clinical services.

There will be a continued focus on client-centred care with packages of funding wrapped around the client and services that are delivered closer to their homes. This trend is evident in current funding programs such as the National Disability Insurance Scheme, My Aged Care and the Health Care Homes trials.

There is an increasing need to adopt new ways of working to improve efficiencies and achieve coordinated care. To do this, persistent challenges to new models of care associated with workplace culture and traditional professional boundaries will need to be addressed. Opportunities exist for inter-professional practice where all members of the care team participate and rely on one another to improve healthcare delivery and the quality of the client experience. Inter-professional education is already evident at the pre-entry level and there is potential to expand student experiences in this area through collaborative practice experiences on placements.

Concurrently, there is a need to shift from volume to value-based models for our healthcare system to be sustainable and improve client outcomes. To achieve this, access to research support and translation of research into practice is important to enhance the delivery of evidence based care. Outcome data will be essential to measure our value and contribution, and to plan allied health services that address the healthcare needs of the community. Advances in technology and digital solutions will also impact the way we work, the roles of health professionals and the skills that are required into the future.

With these changes in the healthcare environment a more adaptive and responsive workforce will become imperative. There will be more opportunities for the allied health workforce to optimise their role to meet the needs of their communities.

Allied health leaders at all levels have the opportunity to maximise allied health's contribution to health service delivery through innovation and building cohesive multi-professional teams. There is potential to contribute further to health service planning and resource allocation through appropriate representation on hospital and health service executive management teams.

This 10-year strategy maps a clear direction for the allied health workforce to embrace innovation, deliver clinical excellence, work collaboratively and use new technology to make a difference to the lives of Queenslanders.

I look forward to working with the allied health workforce and key stakeholders to achieve the vision set out in this strategy.



Liza-Jane McBride
Chief Allied Health Officer
Clinical Excellence Queensland
Queensland Health

Vision

Queenslanders have access to high value, client-centred allied health services with care provided by the right practitioner, in the right setting, at the right time.

Goals



The allied health workforce is optimised to provide best care and best value

Our highly skilled and capable workforce is prepared, available and accessible to support services to prevent admissions and reduce waiting times.



Healthcare is integrated and delivered in partnership as close to home as possible

Allied health professionals work in partnership with consumers, as an integral component of high performing, multi-professional healthcare teams.



Sustainable models of care are adopted to meet health care needs into the future

The work we undertake is innovative, contemporary, and supported by research and evidence so we can adapt to meet future healthcare demands.

Critical enablers

Leadership



Workforce



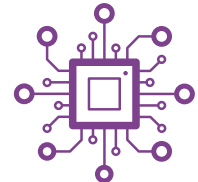
Clinical education and training



Research

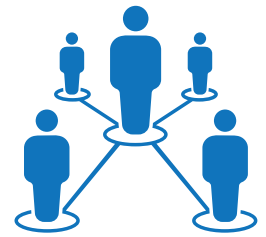


Digital transformation



Leadership

Allied health leadership capability and influence is enhanced so leaders are well equipped to lead reform, drive change, add value and make an effective contribution to health service outcomes.



Strategic priorities

1. Embed leadership development and succession planning into allied health services.
2. Advocate for allied health leaders, including executive positions, in health services to have professional and operational control over allied health services including responsibility for the allocation and reallocation of allied health resources.
3. Increase capacity of senior allied health leaders to be well positioned to join health service and regulatory boards and obtain non-allied health executive appointments within the Department and hospital and health services.



Key initiatives

- Develop, implement and evaluate a leadership development framework which integrates available development strategies, education and training programs and health service based opportunities.
- Support allied health staff to participate in leadership development initiatives from early career.
- Articulate the value for allied health representation at senior/executive levels in the organisation.
- Continue to advocate for leadership/management positions to be jointly advertised as HP/NO/DSO where appropriate.



Indicators of success

- Allied health staff are prepared and ready to take on next level leadership roles, leading productive and effective services.
- Allied health leaders hold positions in hospital and health service executive management teams and boards.
- Allied health are leaders across health systems, not just in allied health services.

Workforce

Optimise the allied health workforce and service models to contribute to the broader healthcare team, and provide high value, efficient and person-centred services.



Strategic priorities

1. Invest in high value and evidence based care that offers the greatest benefit to clients. This includes models of care that use inter-professional practice where appropriate and support access to allied health services in the community.
2. Work collectively to ensure that local and statewide allied health workforce profiles are informed by healthcare priorities. This includes a workforce profile that:
 - Optimises new graduate, allied health assistant, rural generalist and allied health consultant roles.
 - Strengthens diversity through developing a workforce profile that reflects the communities we serve and improves Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce participation.
3. Assist hospital and health services to meet their Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) by:
 - Focusing resources to deliver high value allied health services which are shown to improve timely and equitable access to care.
 - Embedding proven allied health models of care that enable full scope of practice, and where appropriate extended scope.





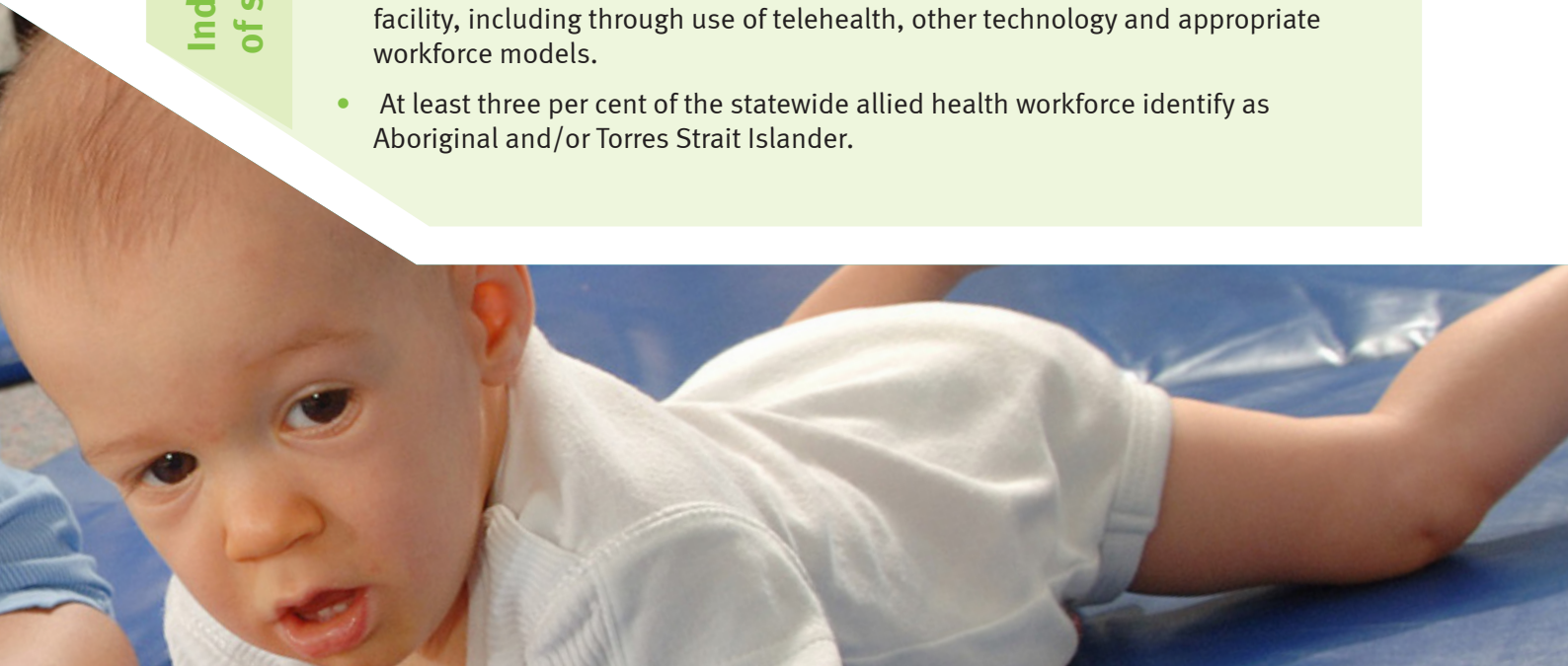
Key initiatives

- Implement sustainable models of care that optimise allied health scope of practice to improve clients' access to value based healthcare.
- Develop an advancing practice framework for all levels of the workforce that includes the domains of clinical care, optimising health systems, education, research and leadership. Target development strategies to these domains to enable staff to fulfil the potential of their role.
- View every vacancy as an opportunity to adjust the workforce profile in order to optimally align allied health roles with service demands.
- Establish statewide allied health consultant roles to assist in embedding and sustaining high value models of care that optimise scope of practice.
- Work to address regulation, legislation, policy, funding and accreditation issues that impact scope of practice for allied health professionals.
- Trial innovative models of integrated care with other healthcare providers and funding agencies to support systems-level outcomes, including access to allied health services in the community, preventing hospital admissions and decreasing waiting times.
- Implement the Allied Health Rural Generalist Pathway in rural and remote services to improve access to quality healthcare for rural and remote communities.
- Use co-design frameworks to engage consumers in the development of allied health services.
- Implement proven recruitment and retention strategies for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people for allied health roles.



Indicators of success

- Allied health service models assist hospital and health services to achieve their KPIs.
- Client satisfaction with allied health services is high.
- Allied health rural generalist training positions are embedded in all hospital and health services with a rural or remote workforce.
- Ambulatory care is delivered in the home or at the client's nearest healthcare facility, including through use of telehealth, other technology and appropriate workforce models.
- At least three per cent of the statewide allied health workforce identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.



Clinical education and training

Build the capability and capacity of our emerging, new and existing professional and support workforces to optimise scope of practice and effectively meet the healthcare demands of the future.



Strategic priorities

1. Strengthen connections between healthcare and university sector partners, to ensure the workforce is able to respond to changing community healthcare needs and service requirements.
2. Develop and implement sustainable training pathways from early career to advanced roles for allied health professionals and support staff.
3. Adopt inter-professional education and learning approaches that build collaborative practice approaches and support integrated client-centred care.



Key initiatives

- Support development of allied health clinical education capacity through continued implementation and retention of clinical educator positions provided through the *Health Practitioners (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No. 1) 2007*.
- Develop and implement training pathways for allied health professionals and support staff that sustainably deliver the workforce capabilities and skill sets required to respond to community and service needs and to assist hospital and health services to meet performance targets.
- Embed a sustainable funding and implementation model for the allied health rural generalist pathway including designated training roles and education programs.
- Partner across health and education including hospital and health services, primary care, universities, University Departments of Rural Health, professional bodies and vocational training providers to implement innovative strategies and initiatives that support increased education and training capacity for the allied health workforce in Queensland.
- Work collaboratively across health and education sectors to implement inter-professional education models for emerging and existing workforces.



Indicators of success

- Sufficient numbers of high quality allied health placements are provided to meet current and projected workforce requirements.
- Allied health placements are undertaken in settings that reflect the future service demands of the community.
- Workplace training pathways are established from early career to advanced practice roles and for support workers.
- Inter-professional practice is embedded across healthcare settings to achieve integrated client care.
- The education and training model for allied health rural generalist training positions is embedded and sustainable.
- At least 80 per cent of allied health professionals in HP3 roles in rural or remote areas are completing or have completed the Allied Health Rural Generalist Pathway.



Research

Build the capacity and capability of the allied health workforce to support quality research that further develops the evidence base for allied health.



Strategic priorities

1. Promote and embed a research culture, including translation of evidence into practice, within the allied health workforce.
2. Build research partnerships and collaborations across sectors, health services, industry, health teams and academic institutions, and at local, state, national and international levels.
3. Develop research career structures and pathways for allied health professionals.



Key initiatives

- Continue investment in the Health Practitioner Research Capacity Building Program provided through the *Health Practitioners (Queensland Health) Certified Agreement (No. 1) 2007* to ensure that allied health researchers are well placed to make an effective contribution to health service research agendas.
- Develop and implement allied health research career structures and pathways from early career to research fellow/clinical consultant level.
- Influence policy to address issues that impact allied health research efficiency and effectiveness.
- Improve access to research education and resources.
- Develop inter-sectoral investment or linkages for all research positions.

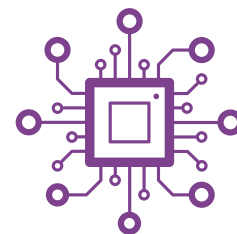


Indicators of success

- Allied health research career structures are in place.
- The quality of Queensland Health allied health research is recognised and acclaimed at a national and international level.
- Allied health activity is evidence based and demonstrates improved client outcomes.
- Allied health researchers are integrated into major research projects and institutes and contribute to national and international research agendas.
- Allied health research is aligned to identified service needs and priorities.

Digital transformation

Optimise the use of digital technology to enhance client care, improve safety and quality, and measure service performance and client outcomes.



Strategic priorities

1. Adopt and digitally collect standardised allied health data for use at state and national levels to enable more efficient and integrated care.
2. Use data analytics to plan and evaluate allied health services.
3. Implement digitally enabled models of care that leverage the benefits of technology to improve service access, efficiency and responsiveness.



Key initiatives

- Implement consistent clinical and client-reported outcome measures.
- Continue to develop the clinical data set specification in the Allied Health National Best Practice Data Sets in collaboration with other jurisdictions, professional associations and relevant agencies.
- Develop data standards for transfer of care.
- Develop standardised tools and resources to support the use of data analytics for allied health services.
- Support the allied health workforce to use digitally enabled healthcare that facilitates client engagement in self-management and capacity building strategies e.g. apps, SMS messages, on-line coaching, telehealth.



Indicators of success

- The Allied Health National Best Practice Data Set clinical data sets are collected seamlessly in digital health systems including the ieMR and My Health Record.
- Integrated allied health transfer of care standards are developed and implemented.
- Valid and meaningful data is available to guide allied health decision-makers in the allocation and re-allocation of resources.
- Compelling stories regarding the value of allied health services can be told.
- Use of digital solutions are widely employed to enhance client care.

Implementation

This strategy outlines the overarching vision, strategic priorities and initiatives for building the future of allied health for Queensland Health over the next 10 years.

As we progress to implementation, there will be a continued focus on innovation, clinical excellence, collaborative approaches and use of new technology to maximise allied health contribution to health service delivery.

Governance and review mechanisms will be established to guide implementation and ensure that the initiatives and activities outlined in this strategy continue to represent contemporary, best practice solutions. This will include the development and review of implementation plans to guide the Department of Health and Hospital and Health Services in the implementation of the initiatives and activities outlined in this strategy document. These plans will include measures to monitor progress and examine successes over the next 10 years.

Communication with internal and external stakeholders will be integral to the delivery of more adaptive and responsive allied health services. Existing partnerships will be maintained and new partnerships developed to ensure that organisational priorities and efforts are focused on those strategies that provide the greatest benefits.

Queensland Health is committed to implementing this allied health strategy and recognises the great opportunities ahead for the allied health workforce to optimise their role and make a difference to the lives of all Queenslanders.



