



## *“Primary Health Care excellence in rural and remote North and West Queensland”*

### **Introduction**

North West Queensland Primary Health Care (NWQPHC) supports over 100 GPs and registrars in north and west Queensland. Covering more than 770 000 square kilometres, the Division spans from Cardwell and Mornington Island to the north, Birdsville to the south west, Palm Island to the east, the Northern Territory and South Australian borders to the west and Tambo to the southeast. The Division's GP members service approximately 116 000 Queenslanders. Approximately 90 staff are attached to offices in Townsville, Longreach and Mt Isa, offering support in the areas of practice management, recruitment, professional development and health services support. In addition, NWQPHC offers allied health outreach services and operates health clinics in Birdsville, Bedourie and McKinlay.

### **Business**

NWQPHC promotes the central role of general practice in rural and remote primary health care by working collaboratively with key stakeholders and general practice. NWQPHC is one of 120 Divisions Australia-wide, and one of 19 in Queensland. NWQPHC's activities align along three streams, each of which is briefly outlined below.

#### **Workforce and Communities:**

GPs and their practices are supported via a team offering advice and assistance on business and workforce issues. Assistance is given to GPs, practice nurses and practice staff to continue professional development via subsidies for attendance at professional development events. Help is also provided to practices for general practice accreditation, interpreting new Medicare initiatives and linking general practice with their communities.

#### **Health Services:**

Current priority health areas for NWQPHC include chronic disease, indigenous health and population health.

NWQPHC provides a range of health services to help GPs care for patients. Outreach allied health services are provided by health professionals in the disciplines of podiatry, psychology, dietetics, dementia advisory service, occupational therapy, speech therapy, continence advisory service, diabetes education and physiotherapy. NWQPHC staff work closely with GPs to ensure continuity of care and maximise patient outcomes. Health clinics are also managed from facilities in Birdsville, Bedourie and McKinlay.

#### **Information and Communication Technology & Information Management:**

This team encompasses the disciplines of information technology, information management and communication. The group's charter is to ensure processes are in place to effectively and expediently collect data, interpret it and communicate via a range of channels to appropriate internal and external stakeholders.

#### **Research and Evaluation:**

This team aims to determine the needs of GPs within our Division, identifies support mechanisms and subsequently evaluates the effectiveness of NWQPHC's efforts. The ultimate goal of the team is to support GPs and practices in the achievement of better health outcomes for individuals and communities within the Division.

## Support Services:

Focusing on the finance and administration activities of the organisation, this stream ensures governance and funding-body criteria are met. They are also responsible for human resource functions and daily administrative operations.

## Founded

North Queensland Rural Division of General Practice (NQRDGP) .....	March 1994
Central West Queensland Rural Division of General Practice .....	March 1994
North and West Queensland Primary Health Care (amalgamation of NQRDGP and Central West Queensland Rural Division of General Practice) .....	June 2003

## Funding

NWQPHC is the “not for profit” incorporated association of North Queensland Rural Division of General Practice and the Central West Queensland Rural Division of General Practice. Initially, Divisions were developed as a partnership between GPs and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care. Funding for NWQPHC’s services is increasingly sourced from alternative programs such as Home and Community Care (HACC), More Allied Health Services (MAHS), Rural Health Service (RHS) and Primary Health Care Assistance Program (PHCAP).

## Coverage

NWQPHC’s geographical boundary overlaps (entirely or partial) five Queensland Health Service Districts (Mt Isa, Townsville, Bowen, Innisfail and Charters Towers).

Major NWQPHC office locations include Townsville, Longreach and Mt Isa.



### Townsville

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Currajong QLD 4812

**Postal Address:**

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Garbutt QLD 4814

**Contact:**

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Fax: 07 4725 5122  
Email: [admin@nwqphc.com.au](mailto:admin@nwqphc.com.au)

### Mt Isa

**Office Address:**

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Mt Isa QLD 4825

**Postal address:**

PO Box 1127  
Mt Isa QLD 4825

**Contact:**

Telephone: 07 4749 4615  
Fax: 07 4743 4858  
Email: [nwqahs@nwqphc.com.au](mailto:nwqahs@nwqphc.com.au)

### Longreach

**Office Address:**

Suite 6 Eagle Arcade  
Longreach QLD 4730

**Postal address:**

PO Box 256  
109 Eagle Street  
Longreach QLD 4730

**Contact:**

Telephone: 07 4658 3622  
Fax: 07 4658 3630  
Email: [admincw@nwqphc.com.au](mailto:admincw@nwqphc.com.au)

## Management and general practitioner participation

NWQPHC is governed by a management board, consisting of GPs, consumer representatives, local area network representatives, advisory members and a Townsville Division of General Practice representative.

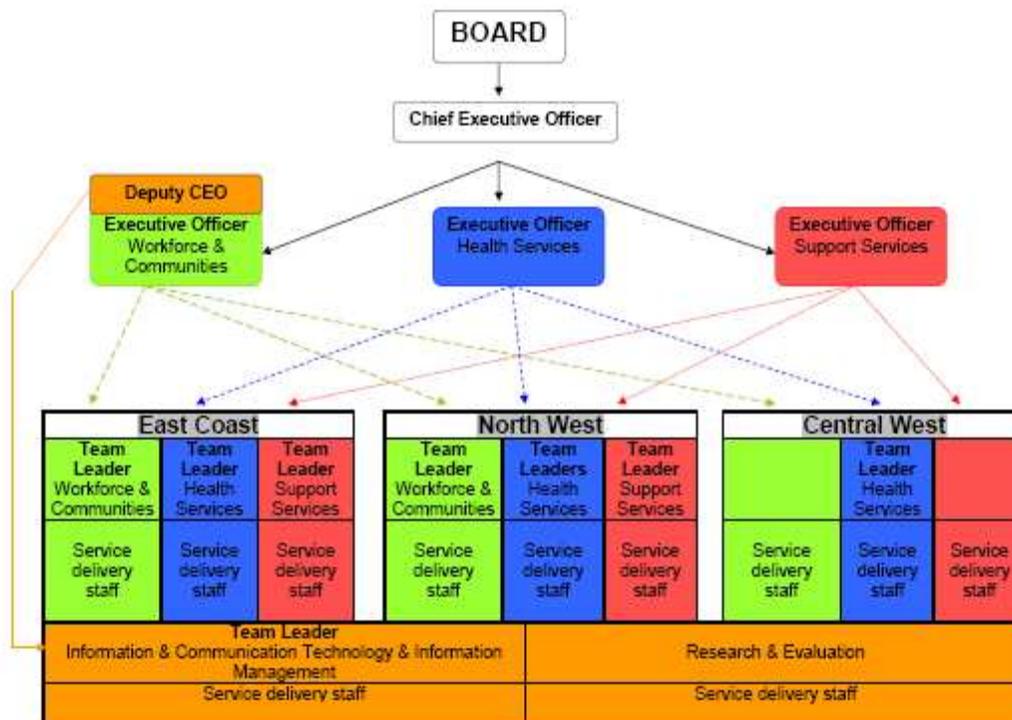
GP participation is encouraged by membership; participation in NWQPHC’s research; program planning, implementation and evaluation; and Divisional representation at local, state and national levels. Financial Members are able to vote on governance matters and receive subsidisation for attendance at events.

## Staff

Most of NWQPHC's 90 employees are located in one of three office locations (Townsville, Longreach or Mt Isa). Staff are also based in communities such as McKinlay, Ingham, Cloncurry, Birdsville and Bedourie. Staff are designated to one of three work streams: Workforce and Communities, Health Services, or Support Services.

Executive staff include: Chief Executive Officer - Kelly McTaggart; Deputy Chief Executive Officer and Executive Officer, Workforce and Communities - Dr Ross Nable (PhD); Executive Officer, Health Services – Joanne Symons; and Executive Officer, Business and Support Services - Evelyn Edwards.

A 'Place Planning' model has been adopted segmenting the Division into three areas. The model provides a single Divisional contact for GPs, regardless of the issue.



## Communication & Participation

- ❖ Monthly meetings by the governance board are held to discuss issues and set direction for NWQPHC.
- ❖ NWQPHC's web site is used by members, consumers and staff ([www.nwqphc.com.au](http://www.nwqphc.com.au)).
- ❖ A quarterly Divisional publication, the "Pituri" is provided to all GPs, practice staff and other interested parties and is available on NWQPHC's website.
- ❖ Team leaders and practice support officers maintain regular communications with general practices in their localities via personal visits, area newsletters, faxes, emails and phone.
- ❖ A Community Panel offers feedback and input into future services, meeting every six months.
- ❖ NWQPHC members and staff have presented at local, state and national conferences.
- ❖ NWQPHC's annual report is published in October each year and supplied to all members.
- ❖ NWQPHC's Annual Divisional conference is held yearly in October, coinciding with the annual general meeting.
- ❖ Meetings and discussions between the governance board, staff, other health organisations and consumer bodies are held throughout the year.

## Major Events

### 2005

- August Official Opening of Bedourie and Birdsville clinics.
- May NWQPHC assumes responsibility for health service provision in the Diamantina shire, in a collaborative partnership with federal, state and local governments.
- January NWQPHC expands its allied health outreach services to eastern communities including Bowen, Collinsville, Ayr, Home Hill, Ingham, Cardwell, Palm Island and Charters Towers (podiatry, occupational therapy, diabetes educators, continence advisors and psychology).

### 2004

- July NWQPHC temporarily assumes operation of Cloncurry Medical service provision after the departure of two local GPs.
- July NWQPHC assumes responsibility for operations of Qld Bush Nurses Clinic at McKinlay, north west Queensland.
- March Collaborative project begins with NWQPHC and Queensland Rural Flying Doctor Service.

### 2003

- July NWQPHC and Central Western Queensland Division of General Practice merge to bring the total area of responsibility to approximately 770 000 square kilometres of rural and remote Queensland.
- July A 'Place' planning model replaces the 'program' model, allow NWQPHC to work more closely with communities and tailor services according to their needs.

### 2002

- December North West Queensland Allied Health Service is established in Mt Isa and begins providing allied health services to 16 remote communities in the far north west. Inclusion in the rural consortium for EDQUM and NPS.

### 1998

Developed Rural and Remote Women's Health Service which was then transferred to the Royal Flying Doctor Service for national operation.

Development and VTEC accreditation of indigenous health worker training module in CVD secondary prevention.

### 1997

NWQPHC selected as one of two rural Divisions included as pilot Outcome Based Funding (OBF) Divisions.

### 1994

- March NQRDGP incorporated as a Rural Division of General Practice.  
CWQRDGP incorporated as a Rural Division of General Practice.

## More Information

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