



ANNUAL MEMBERS' CONFERENCE 2023

4—7 DECEMBER | BRISBANE, MEANJIN

POST CONFERENCE REPORT





Acknowledgement

We acknowledge and wholly support all Traditional Owners for their continuing connection to this country and their communities. We recognise their continuing connection to these lands and waters, and thank them for protecting this country and its ecosystems since time immemorial. We pay respect to them and to their Elders past, present and emerging.



INTRODUCTION

The 2023 Annual Members' Conference was held from 5 – 7 December 2023 in Meanjin, Brisbane on Yuggera and Turrbal Country. Hosted by QAIHC, a Clinical Leaders' Forum and Member Workshop afternoon preceded the official Annual Members' Conference. As the annual gathering of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Organisation (ACCHO) sector leaders from across Queensland, the Conference brought together more than 100 participants from 33 Member services. The Conference also featured presentations from key industry figures to learn from and actively inform our vision for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander self-determination into 2024.

Under the theme 'Walking together', the Conference was an opportunity for QAIHC to collectively reset our focus, reaffirm our foundations and renew our priorities for delivering the statewide leadership and support for our sector into the future. It provided an important forum for exchanging knowledge and experience, while generating robust dialogues for participants to take back to their organisations and communities.

The Conference highlighted some of the opportunities our sector enjoys to sustainably deliver well-integrated, comprehensive, culturally safe health care. It also illuminated key barriers and challenges that we must collaboratively and systematically address. The conference also agreed on actions and tools to be developed under the leadership of QAIHC and informed by Members.

Fundamentally, the 2023 Annual Members' Conference marked the start of a new chapter in our sector's story; renewing our collective approach and commitment for Member support and statewide advocacy through QAIHC.

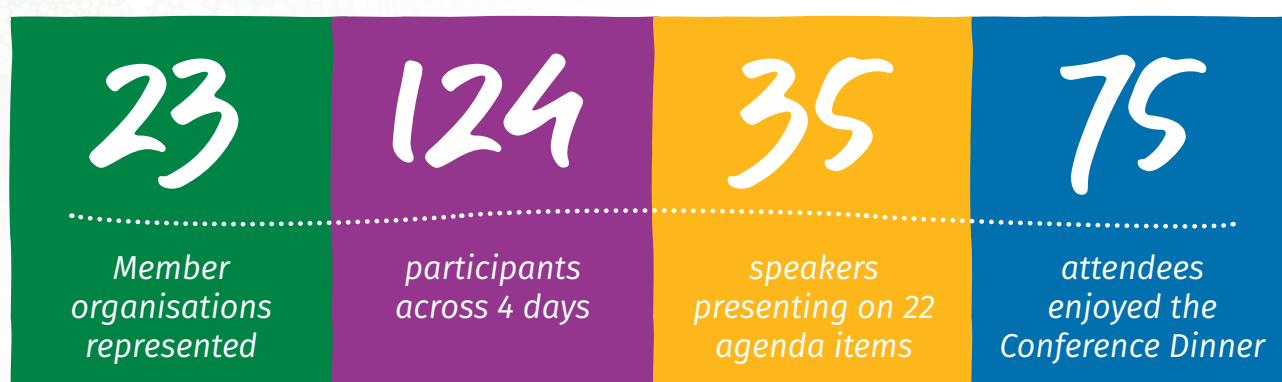
On behalf of all of QAIHC, we would like to thank each of the sector representatives, guest speakers and other partners who contributed to the success of the conference. We look forward to continuing these conversations and taking actions to drive our sector priorities forward into 2024 and beyond.

Matthew Cooke
Chairman

Paula Arnol
A/CEO

CONFERENCE THEME AND FOCUS

'Walking together' is a foundational principle that has guided our sector since the first ACCHO was established in Redfern in 1971. Walking together underpins the invitation in the Uluru Statement of the Heart, and 'Walking Together' is at the centre of our joint commitment to formal partnerships and shared decision making through the National Agreement on Closing the Gap. In this spirit of 'Walking Together', discussions at the 2023 Annual Members' Conference were focused on strengthening the ACCHO sector as both a symbolic and practical way to remove systemic barriers to Closing the Gap. Through agenda discussions, QAIHC demonstrated our commitment to community and government 'walking together', sharing reflections on where we may collectively focus our efforts to strengthen partnerships.



CONFERENCE RESOLUTIONS

The following motions were considered by participants and agreed by majority vote to be passed as Conference Resolutions:

1. That a First Nations Aged Care Reform Agenda be a QAIHC priority in 2024, with QAIHC Secretariat to host a specialist workshop of QAIHC Members in February 2024 to consider the scope and substance of this Reform Agenda and explore with all Indigenous aged care service providers, interested in establishing a State Peak body.

2. That QAIHC seeks a clearer pathway of engagement by NACCHO to ensure Queensland local and statewide issues are adequately presented to the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce to inform its decision-making.

CONFERENCE AWARDS

Although not officially an award year, there were three key anniversaries, celebrated by our Members in 2023, that we wanted to formally recognise. Congratulations to the Northern Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Alliance, Mulungu Aboriginal Corporation Primary Health Care Service, and ATSICHS Brisbane for achieving these significant milestones!



*Northern Aboriginal &
Torres Strait Islander
Health Alliance*



Mulungu
Aboriginal Corporation
Primary Health Care Service



The biannual Awards for Excellence will be celebrated at the 2024 Annual Members' Conference so make a note of excellence when you see it – just in case!



WELCOME TO COUNTRY

Culture remains the cornerstone of the ACCHO sector and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of doing, being, and thinking are embedded in activities across the sector. In accordance with cultural protocol, each of the official events held throughout the 2023 Annual Members' Conference were opened with a Welcome to Country. Traditional Owner, Shannon Ruska, Managing Director of Tribal Experience and descendant of the Yuggera, Turrbal, Nunukul, Gorenpul/Cooparoo, and Yugembir peoples, delivered an inspiring, informative and entertaining Welcome to Country at both the Clinical Leaders Forum and Day 1 of the Conference. The Nunukul Yuggera Aboriginal Dancers joined Shannon in performing a Welcome to Country at the Conference Dinner, sharing traditional songs and dances passed down from their ancestors for thousands of years. QAIHC thanks the Yuggera and Turrbal peoples for hosting us on their Country and for sharing their stories, song, and dance with us at the 2023 Annual Members' Conference.





CLINICAL LEADERS FORUM 4 DECEMBER 2023

The final Clinical Leaders Forum (CLF) for 2023 was led by QAIHC's Public Health Physician, A/Prof Sophia Couzos and Public Health Registrar, Dr Shamila Ginige and was held at QAIHC's offices in South Brisbane, with 24 participants both in-person and online from across Queensland's ACCHO sector.

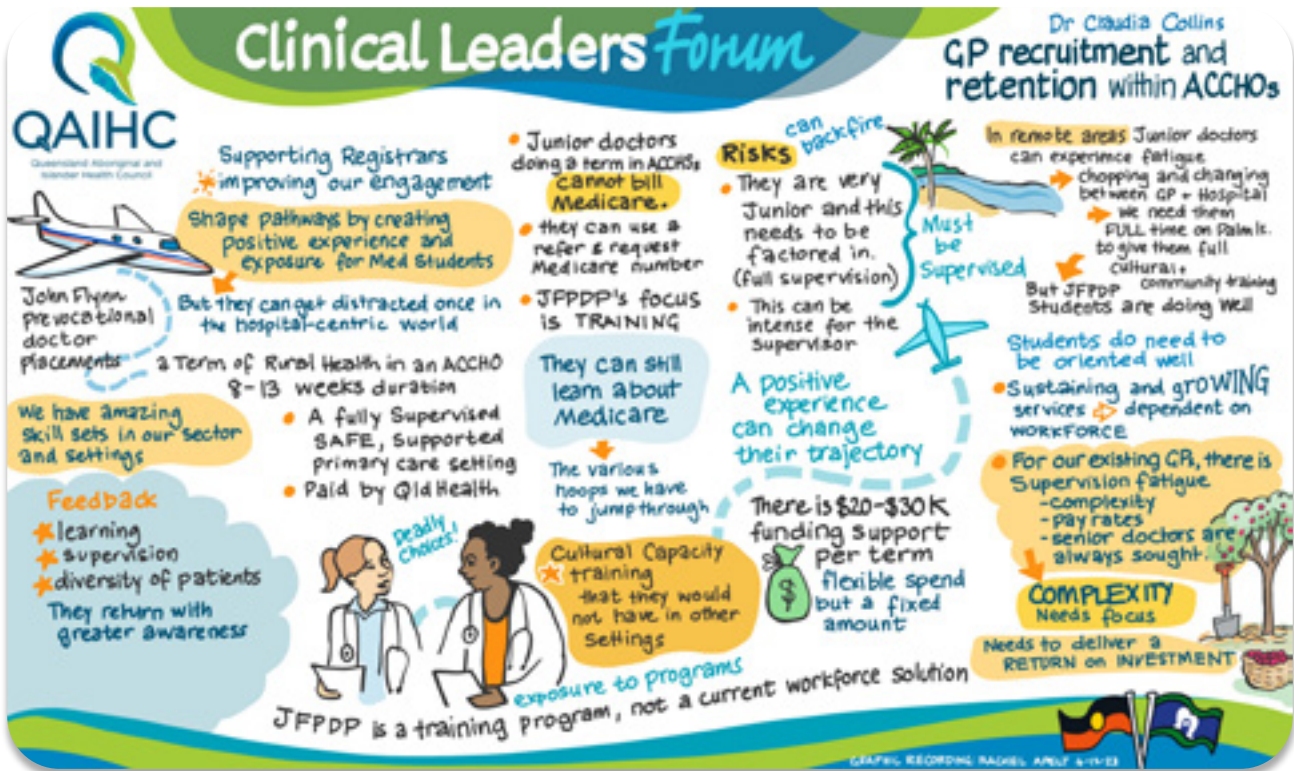
The CLF is a critical forum for clinicians to be informed, share learnings, and develop skills to assist in delivering comprehensive primary healthcare to clients in accordance with the ACCHO Model of Care Framework. QAIHC will host quarterly meetings of the CLF through 2024.

AGENDA		4 DECEMBER 2023
Time	Topic	Presenter
8:30am	Registration	
9:00am	Welcome to Country	
9:15am	Meeting opening	Dr Sophie Couzos , Public Health Physician, QAIHC
9:30am	GP recruitment and retention within ACCHOs	Dr Claudia Collins , Senior Medical Officer, Yulu—Burri—Ba Aboriginal Corporation for Community Health
10:15am	Morning tea	
10:45am	MyMedicare: Discussion of impacts on ACCHOs	Dr Jason Agostino , Medical Advisor, NACCHO
11:45am	Bicillin LA shortage	Mike Stephens , Medicines Policy and Programs Director, NACCHO Alice Nugent , Clinical Pharmacist, NACCHO
12:15pm	Point-of-care testing for Group A Strep	A/Prof Asha Bowen , Program Head of the END RHD Program at Telethon Kids Institute
12:45pm	Lunch	
1:30pm	Cancer screening program panel: Panel discussion focusing on lung cancer and cervical cancer screening and the cultural considerations and opportunities to improve detection and management of cancers	Rebecca Rees , Cancer Director, NACCHO. A/Prof Lisa Whop , Chief Investigator for the Centre for Research Excellence on Targeted Approaches To Improve Cancer Services (TACTICS) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians. Dr Louise Mitchell , Research Fellow, National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Wellbeing Research, ANU.
2:45pm	Afternoon tea	
3:15pm	How to utilise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners	Karl Briscoe , CEO, National Association of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners
4:00pm	Burnout and isolation: Looking after ourselves and our workforce	Dr Jacinta Power , GP and Medical Educator in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, JCU.
4:45pm	Reflections and closing remarks	Dr Shamila Ginige , Public Health Registrar, QAIHC
5:00pm	Close	
6:30pm	Dinner	

KEY DISCUSSIONS

GP recruitment and retention within ACCHOs

Dr Claudia Collins Senior Medical Officer, Yulu—Burri—Ba Aboriginal Corporation for Community Health



Dr Claudia Collins discussed the various opportunities currently available to support junior doctors to enjoy positive placement experiences in our ACCHOs. This is a key strategy in developing a pipeline of workforce interested in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and future recruitment into the sector. These programs and opportunities currently include medical student placements, ACRRM/RACGP registrar placements, and John Flynn Prevocational Doctor Placements (JFPDP).

Dr Collins highlighted the key opportunities for eligible ACCHOs to participate in the JFPDP, indicating it had received great feedback so far from junior doctors. Supporting 8–13 week rotations for junior hospital doctors, the JFPDP is available for postgraduate year (PGY) 1–5 who are working in outer metropolitan and regional hospitals. Eligible primary care facilities must be located within a Modified Monash Model (2019)

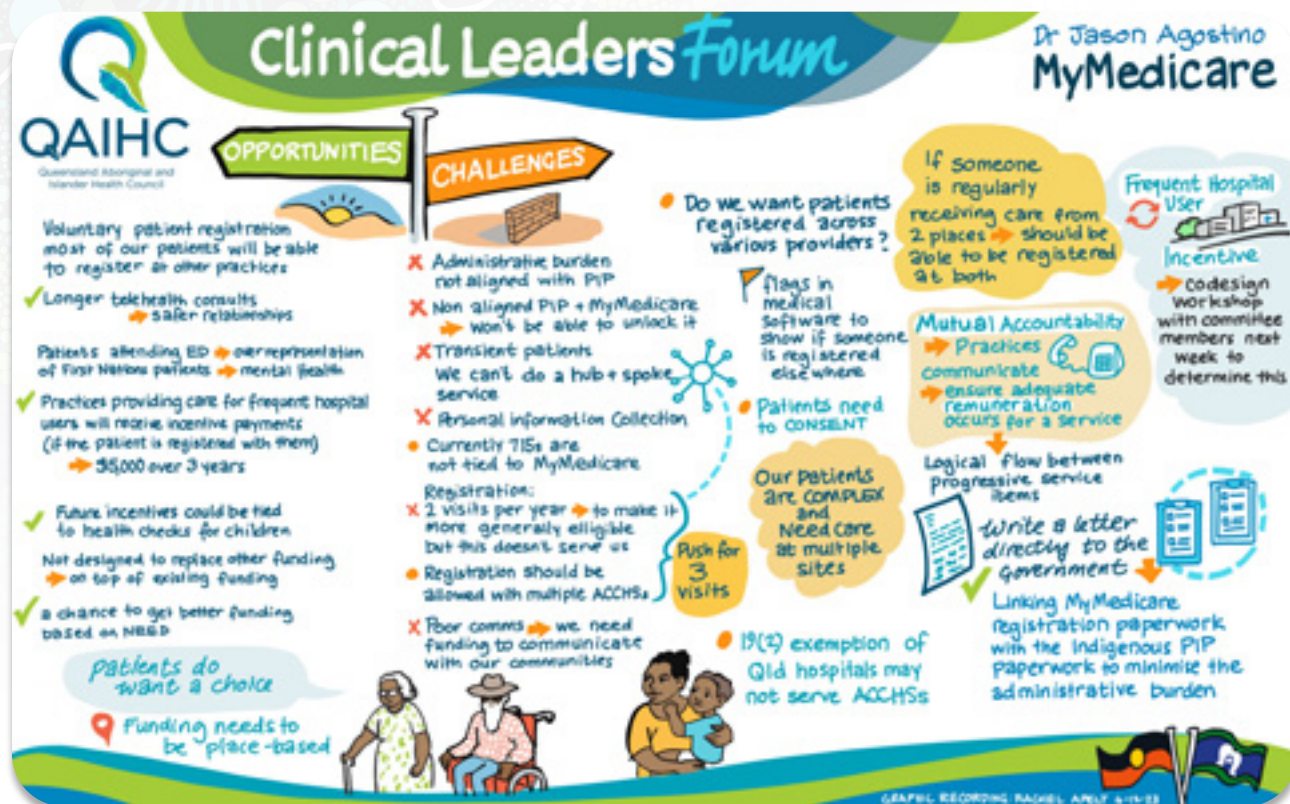
category of MM2 to MM7. Junior doctors require full supervision and are unable to bill Medicare, however the primary care facility receives funding to cover costs related to clinical supervision, furniture, IT, and practice support. Costs such as junior doctor salaries, accommodation, and travel remain the responsibility of the employing HHS.

AGREED AGENDA ITEM ACTIONS:

- Dr Collins to forward feedback received from current services that use the JFPDP. This will be disseminated to the Clinical Leaders Forum so other services can consider this new initiative.
- Workforce recruitment and retention should be a standing item at future CLF meetings.

MyMedicare: Discussion of impacts on ACCHOs

Dr Jason Agostino Senior Medical Advisor, NACCHO



Dr Jason Agostino led a discussion on the new MyMedicare reform and its impact on the sector. Key opportunities highlighted during the discussion included:

- Longer telehealth consultations.
- Practices providing care for frequent hospital users to receive incentive payments.
- Future incentives could be tied to health checks for children.
- An opportunity to receive funding based on need.

The main concerns raised by participants related to the administrative burden (as MyMedicare is not linked with the Practice Incentive Program), as well as

the Section 19.2 exemption used by some Queensland Health hospitals that could 'poach' patients from the local ACCHO. Other challenges related to care for transient patients, registration being linked only to one practice, and poor communication in the implementation of the program.

AGREED AGENDA ITEM ACTIONS:

- QAIHC to draft letter to request MyMedicare registration paperwork be linked with the Indigenous PIP registration paperwork to minimise the administrative burden.

Bicillin LA shortage

Mike Stephens Medicines Policy and Programs Director, NACCHO,

Alice Nugent Clinical Pharmacist, NACCHO

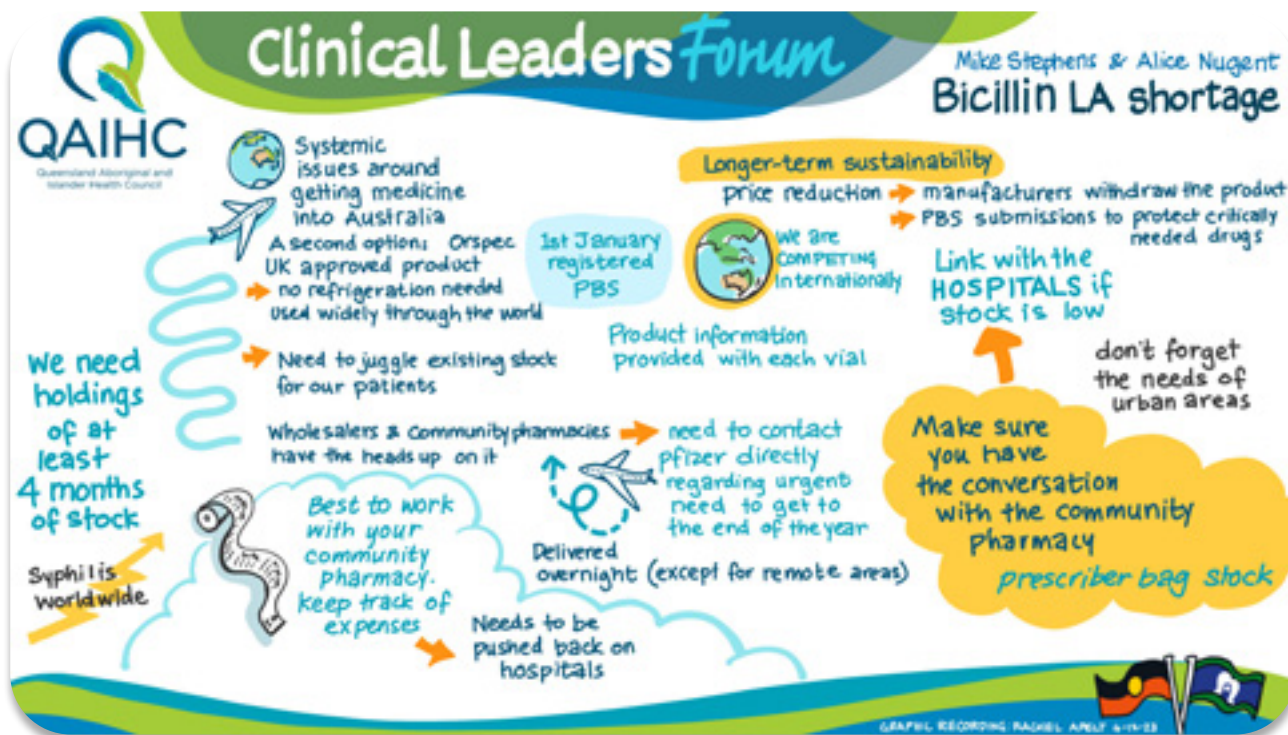
Alice Nugent outlined details of the current Bicillin LA shortage, explaining the systemic issues around getting medicines into Australia and increased global demand of the product. The alternative product, ORSPEC, is likely to be listed on the PBS from 1 January 2024.

Alice reiterated the importance of liaising closely with community pharmacies and local hospitals and

being innovative in the distribution of existing stock of Bicillin. Community pharmacists can contact Pfizer directly to access the emergency stock of Bicillin LA

AGREED AGENDA ITEM ACTIONS:

- QAIHC to continue to monitor shortage and update CLF accordingly.



Point-of-care testing for Group A Strep

Kirsty Smith Senior Research Officer, the Kirby Institute and A/Prof Asha Bowen Program Head of the END RHD Program at Telethon Kids Institute

Kirsty Smith and A/Prof Asha Bowen, Program Head of the END RHD Program, discussed the role of Group A streptococcal (GAS) point-of-care testing. They outlined how GAS infections can be asymptomatic and how universal point-of-care testing would find 30 times the number of cases, whilst avoiding unnecessary treatment of patients who have viral causes of sore throats. They are expecting ethics approval to be granted in mid-2024 with a planned rollout into services thereafter.

AGREED AGENDA ITEM ACTIONS:

- QAIHC to continue to liaise with the Kirby Institute and update CLF with further information on how to be involved in GAS POCT.



Cancer screening program panel

Rebecca Rees Cancer Director, NACCHO,

A/Prof Lisa Whop Chief Investigator for the Centre for Research Excellence on Targeted Approaches to Improve Cancer Services (TACTICS) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians,

Dr Louise Mitchell Research Fellow, National Centre for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Wellbeing Research, ANU

Rebecca Rees, A/Prof Lisa Whop and Dr Louise Mitchell led a great discussion around cancer screening programs in Australia.



Key points highlighted:

- The rollout of the National Lung Cancer Screening Program (NLCSP) begins 1 July 2025, with low-dose CT scans screening eligible people every two years. The eligibility criteria include people aged 50–70 years who are either a current or former smoker (quit in last 10 years) or 30 pack-year history of smoking (1 pack year = 20 cigarettes each day for a year). There will be formal consultation on the NLCSP with the ACCHO sector in 2024 (dates TBC).
- Self-collection cervical screening, available since 1 July 2022, has enabled people to have a choice of clinician collected sample or self-collected vaginal sample.
- There are a range of barriers to screening for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
 - These include lack of access, fear/shame/embarrassment, low awareness, lack of data, distrust of health care services, lack of services that feel safe, cultural beliefs about cancer, pain/discomfort, lack of appropriately tailored information, negative previous experiences, saliency, not feeling sick, previous trauma, and cultural beliefs about women's bodies.

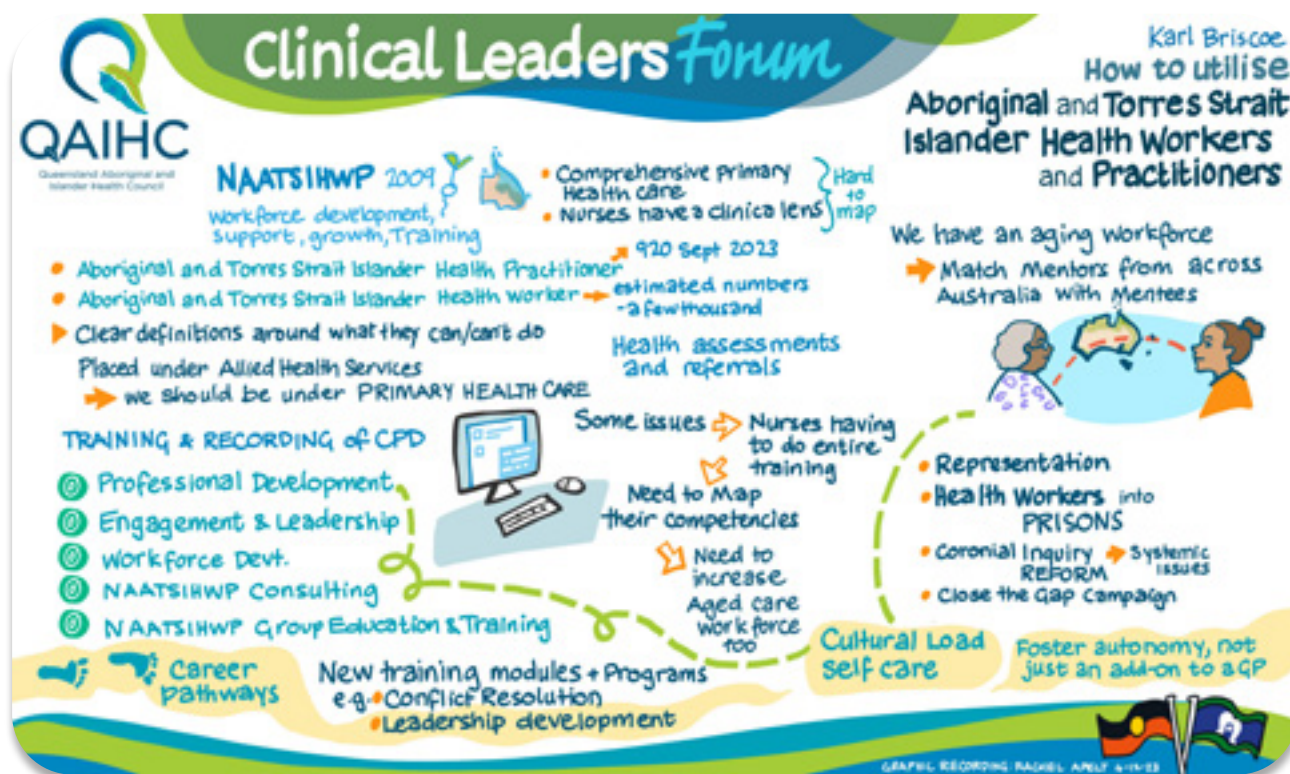
Strategies that can work with cancer screening programs include reducing logistical barriers (i.e. more flexible), self-collection, trusted providers, choice of provider, access to data, community engagement, culturally safe care, allowing support people, locally devised solutions, learning from peers, primary health care engagement, reminders/invitations, tailored awareness campaigns, normalising screening, and healthcare provider recommendation.

AGREED AGENDA ITEM ACTIONS:

- QAIHC to continue to liaise with NACCHO and ANU to aid consultation with Queensland ACCHOs on the roll out of these cancer screening programs.

How to utilise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners

Karl Briscoe CEO, National Association of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioner



Karl Briscoe discussed how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers and health practitioners can best be used in ACCHOs. Outlining the recent new Extended Practice Authority changes for both A&TSIHW and A&TSIHPs, Karl identified the list of vaccines that

each provider can administer (can be found [here for health workers](#), and [here for health practitioners](#)). Karl also described the advocacy work of NAATSIHWP, and the upcoming new training modules and programs.

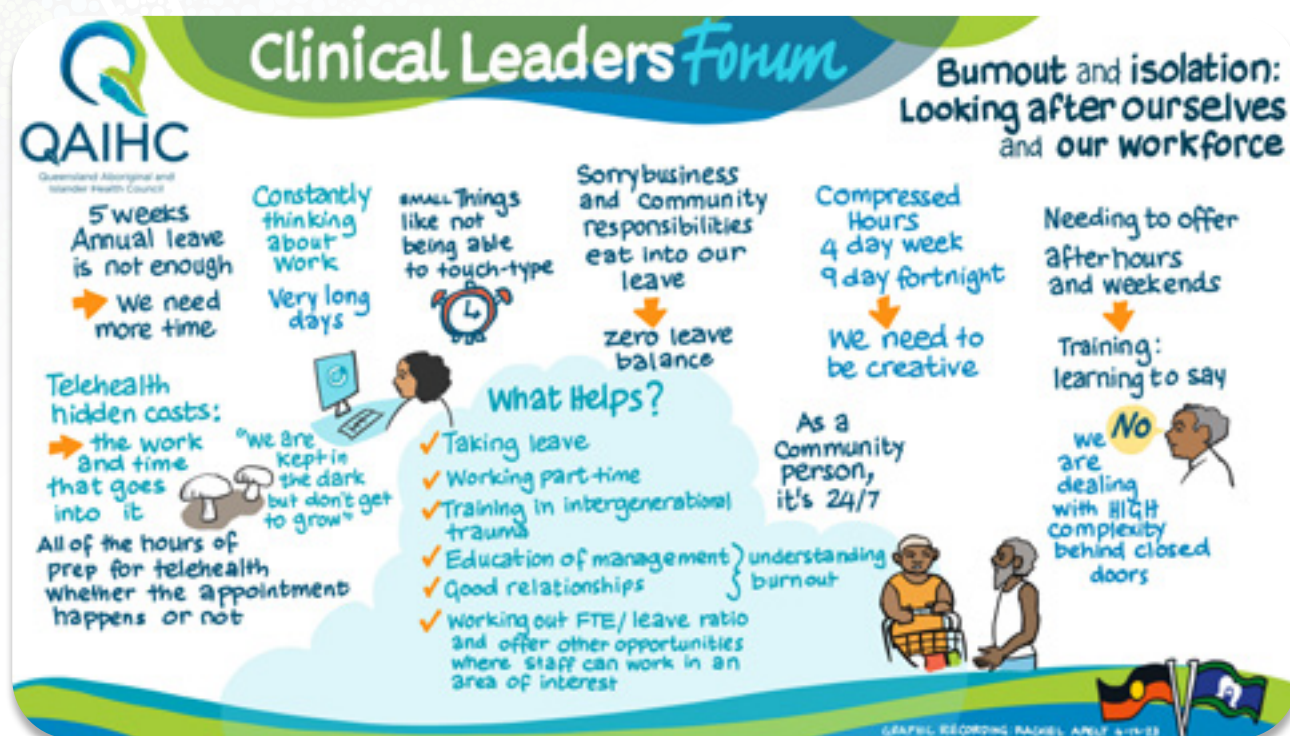
AGREED AGENDA ITEM ACTIONS:

- QAIHC to send out updates on recent EPA changes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers and health practitioners.

Burnout and isolation: Looking after ourselves and our workforce

Unfortunately the planned speaker, Dr Jacinta Power GP and Medical Educator in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, JCU, was unable to attend the Clinical Leaders Forum. However, the agenda item went ahead with good discussion from the attendees around burnout and isolation. Common issues identified by participants related to the hidden

costs of telehealth, Sorry Business, and community responsibilities eating into leave, and constantly thinking about work. Strategies that some participants raised as helpful included: taking leave, working part-time, training in intergenerational trauma, supportive work environments, education of management, and learning to say 'no'.



PRE—CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS

5 DECEMBER 2023

Although not part of the formal Conference agenda, participants took part in a series of workshops held after the Annual General Meeting. Focusing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and youth, QAIHC's Closing the Gap Manager, Stanley

Tatipata skilfully led presentations on issues affecting our children and young people, and facilitated frank discussions on the critical role of the ACCHO sector in supporting young people and their families.

AGENDA		WORKSHOP 5 DECEMBER 2023
12:00pm	LUNCH	
1:00pm	Acknowledgement of Country and Welcome	Robert Skeen <i>General Manager, Health Reform Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC)</i>
1:10pm	Youth Justice	Pele Ware <i>Department of Youth Justice, Employment, Small Business and Training</i>
1:30pm	QAIHC Youth Strategy <i>Policy & Research, QAIHC</i>	Greg Richards <i>General Manager, Policy and Research, QAIHC</i>
2:00pm	Child Protection — Delegated Authority	Rachel Atkinson <i>Palm Island Community Company</i> & Renee Blackman <i>ATSICHS Brisbane</i>
2:45pm	AFTERNOON TEA	
3:00pm	First 2000 Days	David Sinclair <i>Queensland Health</i>
4:00pm	Early Childhood	Tania Porter <i>Queensland Department of Education</i>
4:30pm	Workshop Close	

KEY DISCUSSIONS FROM THE WORKSHOPS

Youth Justice

Pele Ware Department of Youth Justice, Employment, Small Business and Training

Pele Ware provided Members with a strategic overview of the Queensland Government's approach to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people in, or at risk of being, in contact with the criminal justice system. Pele highlighted the important role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisations in supporting young people, their families, and communities and focusing on the underlying issues that lead to offending behaviour.

Acknowledging further investment is still required, Pele highlighted areas where the sector might be well-placed to deliver targeted services funded by the Department of Youth Justice.



QAIHC Youth Strategy

Greg Richards and Jaymie Lynch Policy and Research Division, QAIHC



Seeking to renew the solutions identified in QAIHC's Youth Strategy, Greg Richards and Jaymie Lynch spoke to Members about QAIHC's plans to re-establish the youth networks that had gained significant traction prior to COVID-19, and the integrated youth hubs being established in 10 sites across Queensland.

With targeted funding for the sector from DSDSATSIP through QAIHC, the 10 integrated youth hubs will provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people with access to a range of culturally appropriate health and wellbeing services.

Participants highlighted the underutilisation of ACCHOs across the 10–29 year age cohorts, the sector's opportunity to listen to the voices of young people about the health services they want, and how they should be delivered to inform service models and infrastructure. Participants agreed engaging youth must be a priority for all ACCHOs.

Child Protection – Delegated Authority

Rachel Atkinson Outgoing Chair, Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Child Protection Peak (QATSICPP) and
Renee Blackman CEO, ATSICHS Brisbane

Aunty Rachel Atkinson and Renee Blackman outlined changes to the Child Protection Act that embed the right to self-determination, support family-led decision making, and enable delegation of powers and functions for child protection to the community controlled sector. Seeking to achieve better outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait



Islander children in care, and respecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge on caring for children practiced over thousands of years, Delegated Authority allows child safety decisions to be delegated to an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander CEO in the sector.

With two early adopter sites chosen in 2019 for Delegated Authority (REFOCUS in Maroochydore and Caloundra and Central Queensland Indigenous Development in Rockhampton), the current focus is on building and supporting the foundations for new sites to be established, together with a monitoring and evaluation framework being finalised to inform stage two implementation plans.

First 2000 Days

David Sinclair A/Associate Director—General, Strategy and Reform, Queensland Department of Health

David Sinclair provided an overview of HealthQ32 and the Queensland Government's vision for the future direction of the health system.

With First Nations health a system priority identified within HealthQ32, David expressed his intention to partner with the sector to deliver connected, equitable, and integrated healthcare reform, specifically on women's health reform, through the proposed Queensland Women and Girls' Health Strategy 2032 and the First 2000 Days Initiative.

Robust workshop discussions overwhelmingly supported increased investment in the sector, reaffirming ACCHOs as the most effective provider of primary healthcare services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.



Early Childhood

Tania Porter Deputy Director—General, Queensland Department of Education

Sharing some of the most innovative and heart-warming community-led initiatives, Tania Porter gave her clear commitment to embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership to enhance early childhood systems. She expressed a commitment to providing holistic supports for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and the workforce to deliver responsive early childhood education and care services.



Recognising the critical role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community controlled organisations in supporting the safety, wellbeing, health, and development of children in their early years, Tania outlined the Early Childhood Workforce Strategy that prioritised the voice, aspirations, and expertise of First Nations early childhood professionals in determining the programs and services that are delivered to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children in community and on Country.

MEMBERS CONFERENCE — DAY 1 | 6 DECEMBER 2023

Following Traditional Owner, Shannon Ruska welcoming participants to Yuggera and Turrbal Country, QAIHC Chairman Matthew Cooke formally opened the 2023 Annual Members' Conference, acknowledging those who had travelled, and congratulating QAIHC Deputy Chair, Rachel Atkinson and Board Member, Sheryl Lawton, on their appointment to the NACCHO Board.

Thanking former CEO Cleveland Fagan and Acting CEO Paula Arnol for their strong leadership of QAIHC in 2023, Matthew reflected on some of the key pieces

of work that had been undertaken over the past 12 months to reframe QAIHC's governance and strategic approach back to being Member-led and Member-focused.

Urging Members to stand strong in self-determination, Mr Cooke highlighted the opportunities for the sector in looking beyond health needs analysis towards focusing on models for population health base commissioning, as well as working Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community control partnerships into the broader health system.

AGENDA

DAY 1 | 6 DECEMBER 2023

8:30am	REGISTRATION Tea and coffee available on arrival	
9:00am	Welcome to Country	<i>Tribal Experiences</i>
9:15am	Welcome by QAIHC	Matthew Cooke <i>Chairman, QAIHC</i>
9:30am	QAIHC Generational Framework <i>Policy & Research, QAIHC</i>	Greg Richards <i>General Manager, Policy and Research, QAIHC</i>
10:15am	Pathways to Treaty	Mick Gooda <i>Interim Truth and Treaty Body</i>
11:00am	MORNING TEA	
11:30am	2024 State Elections (Advocacy & Lobbying)	Greg Richards <i>General Manager, Policy and Research, QAIHC</i>
12:15pm	Strengthening our Sector	Robert Skeen <i>Acting General Manager, SD, QAIHC</i>
1:00pm	LUNCH	
2:00pm	My Medicare	Sophia Couzos <i>Public Health Physician, QAIHC</i>
2:30pm	AFTERNOON TEA	
2:45pm	Workforce Update	Nyaree Mewett & Vicky Meyer <i>Check UP</i>
3:30pm	Day 1 Wrap Up	
4:00pm	Close	
6:30pm– 9:30pm	Members' Conference Dinner <i>Frangipani Room, Emporium Hotel, Southbank</i>	

PRESENTERS



MICK GOODA

Co—chair, Interim Truth and Treaty Body



SOPHIA COUZOS

Public Health Physician, QAIHC



KATIE PANARETTO

Public Health Physician, Office of First Nations Health, Queensland Department of Health



NYAREE MEWETT

General Manager, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, CheckUP Australia



VICKY MEYER

General Manager, Workforce CheckUP Australia

Pathways to Treaty

Mick Gooda Co—Chair, Interim Truth and Treaty Body

Highlighting the efforts since 2019 of yarning with community on a treaty in Queensland, Mick Gooda spoke candidly to Members about what a treaty encompasses and the role of the Interim Truth and Treaty Body.

Emphasising treaty involves negotiation and agreement between two sovereign peoples, Mick told how legislation requires agreements to be co-designed through a framework driven by communities

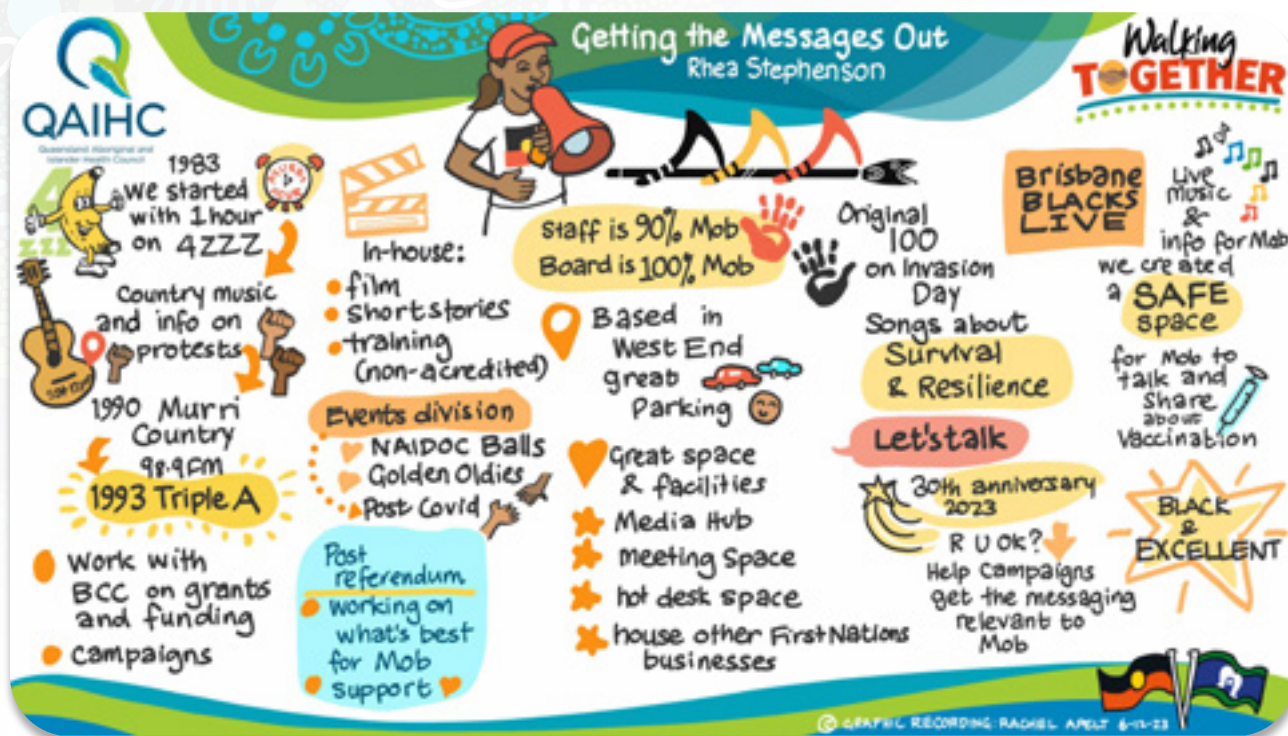
from the ground up. Mick advised that while the Truth and Treaty Body will be able to guide and advise, only community can be decision-makers and this will look different for every agreement.

Members discussed the importance of local truth telling and the need to open the eyes of, and educate, all Australians on our shared history, to allow all people to heal.



Getting the Message Out

Rhea Stephenson Triple A Events, Media & Communications Manager, Brisbane Indigenous Media Association Ltd



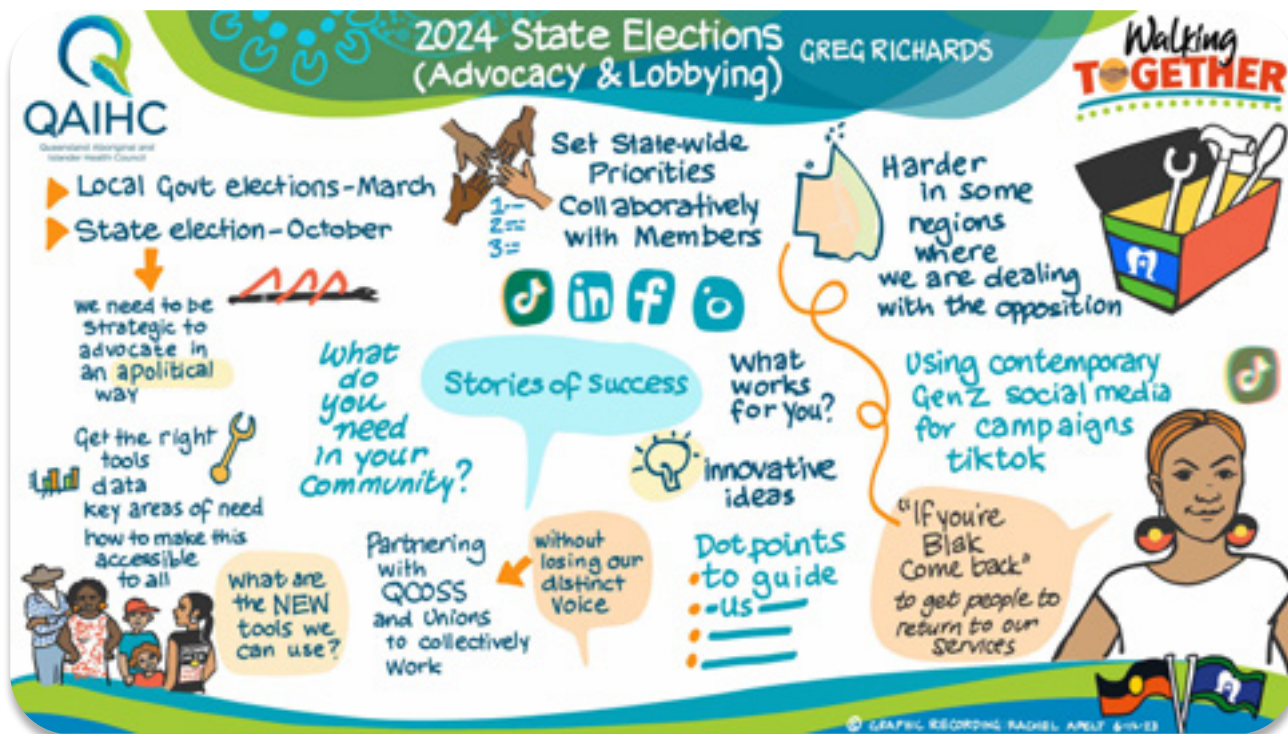
Rhea Stephenson spoke about Triple A's foundations built on the back of mob fighting for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices on the radio. Now in its 30th year, Triple A offers a range of services to support the sector in positioning itself within the health system. Highlighting the importance of targeting messaging and platform to a specific audience, Rhea emphasised the importance of the sector understanding its own message before it is delivered, particularly to overcome and learn from post-referendum challenges.

AGREED AGENDA ITEM ACTION:

- QAIHC to liaise with Triple A to develop sector-wide messaging to support advocacy.

2024 State Elections (Advocacy and Lobbying)

Greg Richards General Manager, Policy and Research Division, QAIHC

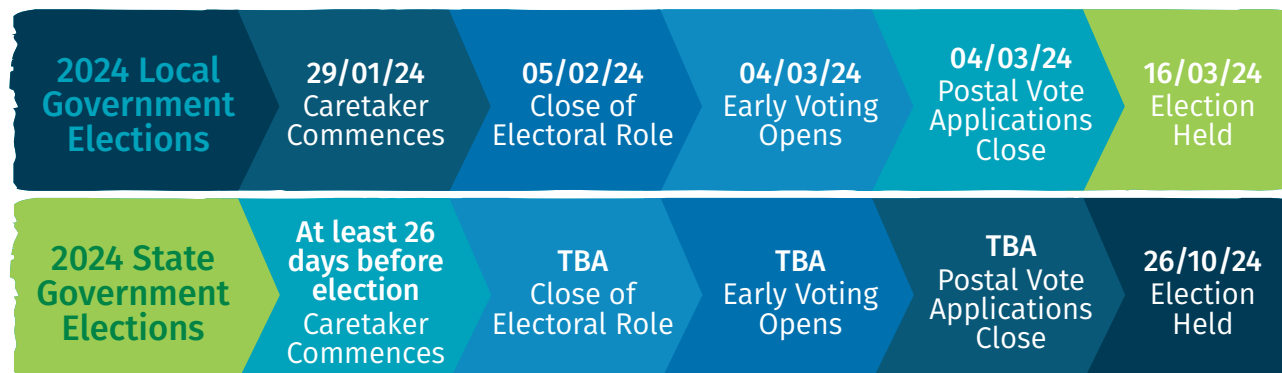


Greg Richards identified the 2024 local and state government elections as a key priority for the sector, confirming QAIHC is developing a range of advocacy tools to assist Members in delivering a statewide approach that could be tailored to meet regional and local electioneering needs.

Enthusiastic discussions between Members recognised the need for partnerships, leadership, and innovation. Acting CEO Paula Arnol committed to QAIHC delivering a Communications and Marketing Strategy to guide Members on this important strategic work.

AGREED AGENDA ITEM ACTIONS:

- QAIHC to develop sector-wide Communications and Marketing Strategy.
- QAIHC to develop election advocacy tools, including short dot points outlining key sector priorities that can be localised.



Strengthening our Sector

Robert Skeen Acting General Manager, Sector Development, QAIHC and

Stanley Tatipata Manager, Closing the Gap, QAIHC



Robert Skeen, spoke on QAIHC's renewed focus and action supporting members to strengthen the sector. Robert reflected on QAIHC's opportunity to overcome QAIHC's challenges in recent years. His speech highlighted QAIHC's renewed efforts to work with Members, build trust, encourage and facilitate communication, and standing up to influence those in power. Acting CEO Paula Arnol reiterated QAIHC will work with all Members in overcoming barriers in this journey.

Members highlighted the need for assistance from QAIHC in navigating complexities they are facing over land, investment, inadequate mapping, leasing, and intricacies with governments and council.

Stanley Tatipata highlighted opportunities for Queensland available through the Closing the Gap Agreement, how it applies to Members, and how to better leverage the Agreement to work for them. He emphasised the findings of the Productivity

Commissions about failed policy partnerships, sector strengthening planning at a national level, and where Members are denied opportunity to provide input. Stanley identified government's co-design approaches have typically failed to listen to communities and that we need to build on our membership and authority in Queensland. Looking forward to 2024 and the Closing the Gap implementation plans, we must hold government to account to meet the socio-economic targets and prioritise the Priority Reforms.

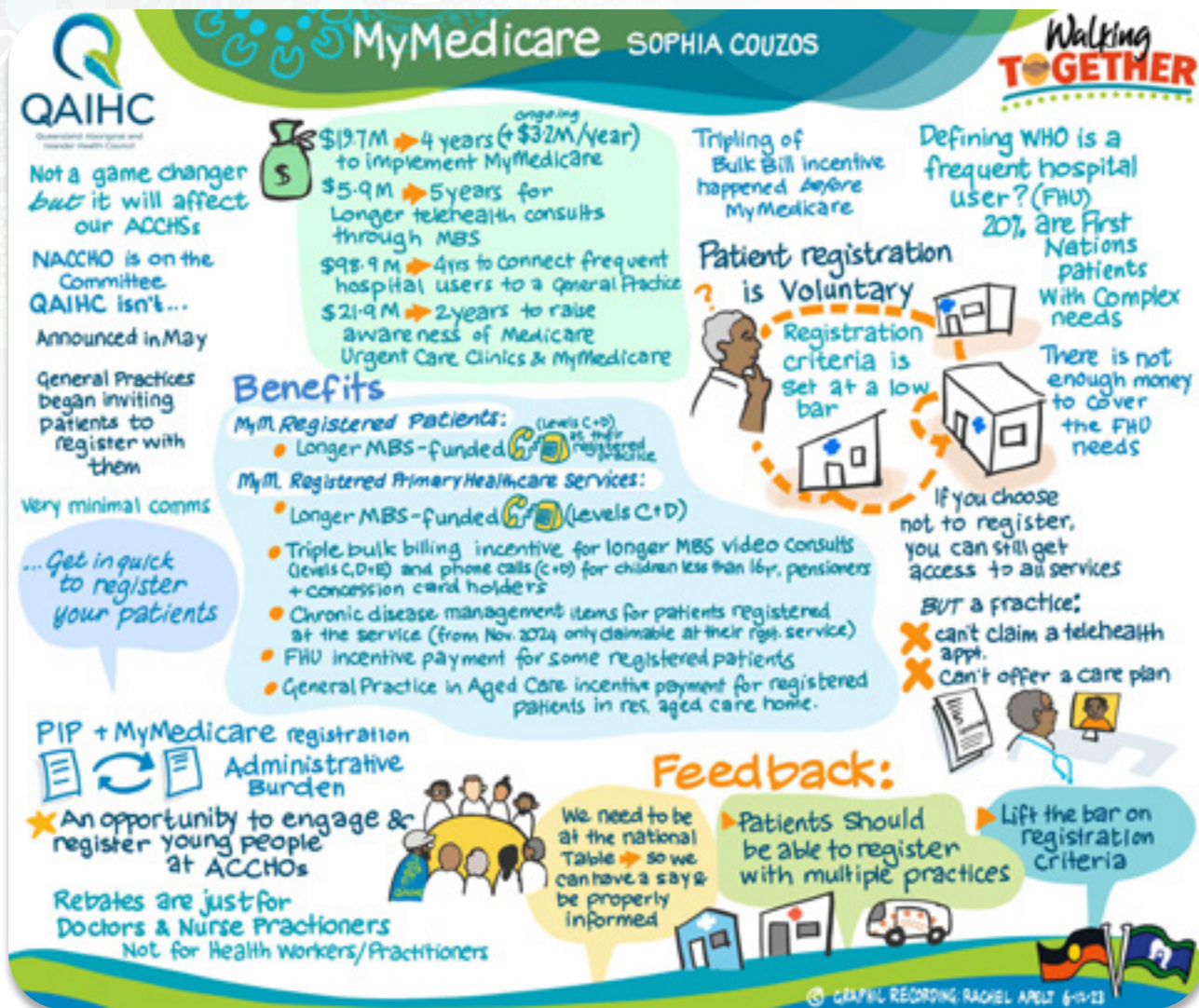
Members raised concerns about not being heard and the disappointing silent processes taking place. Members reflected on successful engagement processes, previously adopted by NACCHO, that used statewide and affiliate expertise to drive a collective position. Members agreed a unified approach is required to ensure our voices are heard: where we come together, we need to be recognising and sharing expertise as well as tools to support sector-wide success.

AGREED AGENDA ITEM ACTIONS:

- QAIHC to develop templates and tools to assist Members.
- QAIHC to advocate to government for longer-term funding contracts.
- CEOs with expertise in specific areas to be endorsed as statewide representative in lieu of QAIHC CEO.

MyMedicare

A/Prof Sophia Couzos Public Health Physician, QAIHC



Dr Sophia Couzos presented on the considerations and challenges for ACCHOs in implementing MyMedicare. An issue is that it may not reflect the differentials in costs of care between urban, rural, and remote settings. Nor does it reflect the true cost of providing health services, such as with the proposed Frequent Hospital Users Incentive payment.

Members highlighted that while the program was intended to be codesigned with the ACCHO sector through NACCHO's representation on the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce, there had been no opportunity for direct QAIHC input into the co-design of the initiative.

Members identified that MyMedicare may be the first in a series of primary care incentives. The group also agreed the views of the sector, including specific issues relating to regional/remote ACCHOs, must inform any decision-making. This is particularly relevant where ACCHO advocacy for funding model reforms differ to those shared by other peak bodies, advocating for fee-for-service-models.

Members agreed strong, collective action was required to ensure Queensland's ACCHO sector is part of any decisions and discussions taking place at a national level and is able to provide accurate and timely advice. In response to discussions, a motion was proposed to be presented to Members on the following day of conference. The following Resolution was unanimously agreed by participants of the Annual Members' Conference on 7 December 2023:

RESOLUTION

A key recommendation in the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce Report was to:

"Grow and invest in Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs) to commission primary care services for their communities, building on their expertise and networks in local community need."

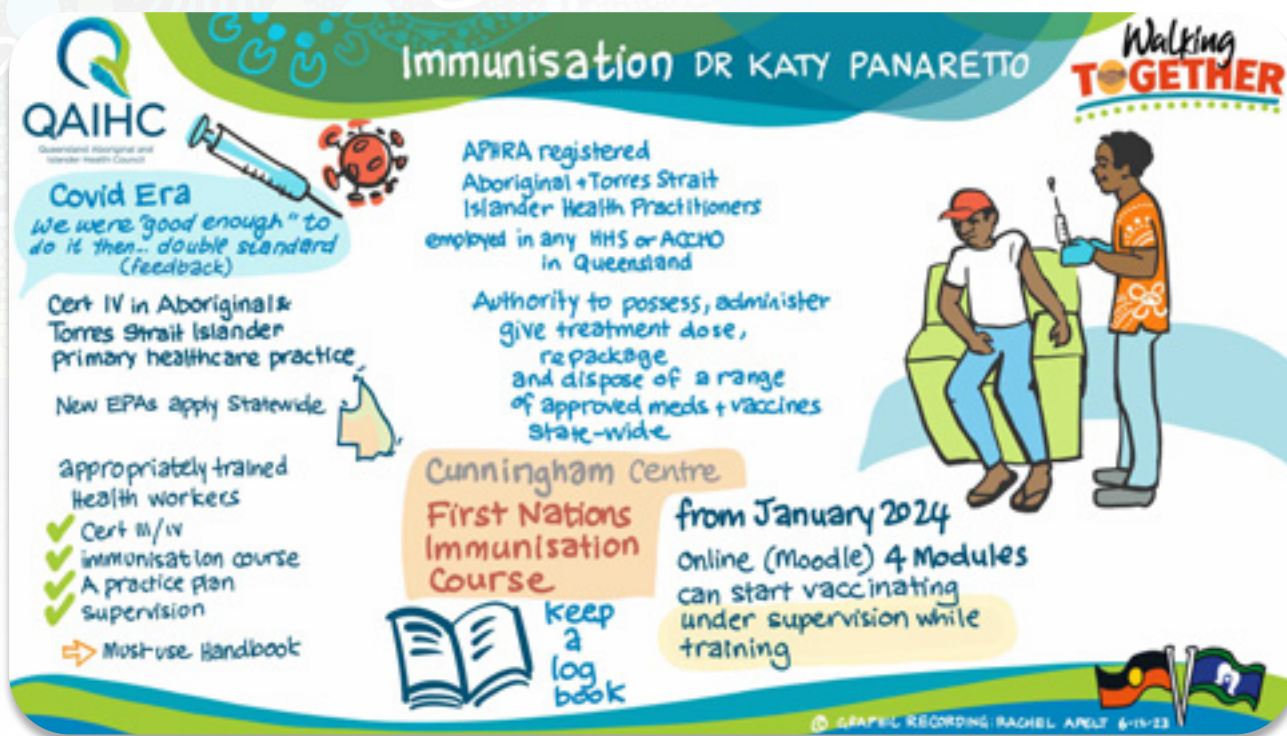
- QAIHC respects the important contribution that the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) makes on issues of national significance in the co-design of the MyMedicare initiative (especially the Frequent Hospital Users Incentive and other potential incentives).
- QAIHC has received advice from its Clinical Leaders Forum and from the Annual Members Conference on priorities that could be included in the co-design process. However, QAIHC has no direct mechanism to advocate on behalf of its members as there is no QAIHC representative on the relevant MyMedicare committees.
- QAIHC seeks a clearer pathway of engagement by NACCHO to ensure Queensland local and statewide issues are adequately presented to the Strengthening Medicare Taskforce to inform its decision-making.

AGREED AGENDA ITEM ACTIONS:

- QAIHC to draft Member Statement on MyMedicare and forward to NACCHO.
- QAIHC to continue to influence for block funding of ACCHOs, including exploring opportunities for partnering with Queensland Health on shared position statement.
- QAIHC to share further advice as available through Clinical Leaders' Forum.

Immunisation

Dr Katie Panaretto Public Health Physician, Office of First Nations Health, Queensland Department of Health



Dr Katie Panaretto spoke about the new Extended Practice Authority (EPA) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers authorising an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health worker, that has completed the relevant training and minimum qualifications, to administer specified vaccines and

immunisations under certain conditions. Dr Panaretto detailed the expanded role of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners where, they are authorised to possess and administer medicines, vaccinations, and additional measures for those practicing in isolated areas.

Workforce Update

Nyaree Mewett General Manager, Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Health, CheckUP Australia and
Vicky Meyer General Manager, Workforce, CheckUP Australia

Nyaree Mewett and Vicky Meyer presented on the Health Industry Skills Program. Funded by the Department of Youth Justice, Employment, Small Business and Training, the Program seeks to address health workforce shortages by engaging with business and training providers to identify necessary VET reforms and support industry engaging with schools to drive a health workforce pipeline.

Members highlighted burdens faced by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce and that despite additional qualifications now required, their scope does not allow for the complexities of remote services or training on Country.

The speakers acknowledged the importance of culture first, workforce planning, development of strategies, encouragement of First Nations people, and challenge mapping. Nyaree and Vicky spoke about Andy Legg, Check Up's First Nations Industry Workforce Advisor (healthcare and social assistance), who supports businesses to access workforce funding and training programs, at no cost. Members were encouraged to reach out to Andy for a yarn to identify any networks or supports.



Members were then given information on the First Nations Health Training Project (FNHTP), where \$4,000,000 over three years has been allocated for Certificate III or higher health qualifications, and are in addition to apprenticeships and traineeships. The program enables support for key gaps that other programs do not, such as: mentoring, existing staff mentorship and support, training not already available (accredited or non), developing micro credentials, having training on Country, partnering with training providers, building trainer and assessor capability in community, and additional wrap around supports required.

Acting CEO Paula Arnol acknowledged the recent work undertaken by QAIHC in developing a sector-wide workforce strategy that reflects what Members were saying about the challenges and opportunities for the ACCHO workforce. Ms Arnol highlighted the critical need to address the siloing between employment, education, and training. She noted QAIHC is looking to partner with QCOSS, unions, and CheckUP to collaborate on the workforce strategies and identify gaps to inform our own workforce strategy.

AGREED AGENDA ITEM ACTION:

- QAIHC to continue to engage with Members in the development of a sector-specific workforce strategy.

MEMBERS CONFERENCE — DAY 2 | 7 DECEMBER 2023

Building on the discussions from the previous day, Day 2 of the Annual Members' Conference was similarly packed with opportunities to yarn, learn, and strategise on how the sector can collaborate and, walking together, position itself firmly at the centre of Queensland's health system.

Following opening remarks from Robert Skeen, Members were able to consider opportunities for sustainably growing the sector and embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and decision-making into health system structures.

AGENDA		DAY 2 7 DECEMBER 2023
8:30am	REGISTRATION Tea and coffee available on arrival	
9:00am	Acknowledgement of Country and Reflections on Day 1	Robert Skeen <i>General Manager, Health Reform, QAIHC</i>
9:15am	Member Showcase: Aged Care	Adrian Carson <i>IUIH</i>
10:45am	MORNING TEA	
11:15am	Cancer Plan Introduced by Greg Richards <i>General Manager, Policy and Research, QAIHC</i>	Jacinta Elston <i>Leading Cancer Expert</i>
12:15pm	Funding/Commissioning Models	David Harmer <i>Health Reform, QAIHC</i>
1:30pm	LUNCH	
2:00pm	Network Strategy	Greg Richards <i>General Manager, Policy and Research, QAIHC</i>
2:15pm	Conference Wrap Up	
2:30pm	Close	

PRESENTERS



ADRIAN CARSON

CEO, Institute for Urban Indigenous Health



JACINTA ELSTON

Leading Cancer Expert

KEY DISCUSSIONS FROM DAY 2

Aged Care System Reform

Adrian Carson CEO, Institute of Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH),

Adrian Carson advocated for a First Nations Aged Care Reform Agenda being progressed as a priority for the sector. He highlighted the growing demand for, and demand on, aged care services to deliver culturally safe care to the growing cohort of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged over 50.

Mr Carson spoke of: the national aged care reforms being provided by the Commonwealth to address increasing challenges, the opportunity for flexible regulation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations, and the potential for greater integration of aged care with primary health care.



Aged Care System Reform Panel Discussion

Adrian Carson CEO, IUIH,

Renee Blackman CEO, ATSICHS Brisbane,

Trent Adams COO, Goolburri Aboriginal Health Advancement,

Matt Moore General Manager — Aged Care, IUIH

Adrian Carson chaired the Aged Care System Reform Panel Discussion. Renee Blackman alongside Trent Adams and Matt Moore shared their reflections as aged care service providers including the funding and compliance challenges that underpin the aged care sector, as well as the importance of growing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce across all aged care settings. Members also shared stories from their own families and communities. They highlighted difficulties in navigating the aged care system, the out-of-pocket charges imposed, and the importance of enabling older people to remain in community and on Country as they get older.

The following Resolution was agreed by participants of the Annual Members' Conference on 7 December 2023:

AGREED AGENDA ITEM ACTION:

- QAIHC to host a sector-led Agenda Care System Reform Summit in February 2024.

RESOLUTION

The 2023 QAIHC Annual Conference resolves:

1. That a First Nations Aged Care Reform Agenda be a QAIHC priority in 2024.
2. That the QAIHC Secretariat convene in February 2024 a specialist Workshop of QAIHC Members to consider the scope and substance of this Reform Agenda that will respond to the needs of Queensland's First Nations older persons by assisting new Aboriginal community-controlled providers to enter into Aged Care.
3. That the QAIHC Secretariat explore with all Indigenous aged care service providers in Queensland, interested in establishing a State Peak body.

Cancer Plan

Adj. Professor Jacinta Elston Chair of Cancer Australia's Leadership Group on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cancer Control



Adj. Professor Jacinta Elston shared with Members her personal and professional insights for strengthening care for mob impacted by cancer and opportunities for targeted funding to the sector to deliver holistic, culturally safe care. Adj. Professor Elston highlighted key priorities identified in NACCHO's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cancer Plan and set out funding streams available to support implementation of those priorities. Jacinta also encouraged Members to apply for funding for local, regional, and statewide models of care to support cancer prevention, screening, early diagnosis, treatment, and wrap around support. She also noted mechanisms to create culturally safe referral pathways for cancer diagnosis and treatment.

Greg Richards updated Members, advising that the proposed First Nations Cancer Plan for Queensland, had not yet been endorsed. However, he noted the draft plan aligns closely with all national cancer strategies.

AGREED AGENDA ITEM ACTION:

- QAIHC to host an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cancer Summit in early 2024 to identify sector-wide priorities and endorse approach for progressing.

Funding and commissioning models

David Harmer Executive Policy Director, Health Reform, QAIHC

David Harmer provided Members with key insights into Queensland Government budget cycles, emphasising the importance of a unified approach to sector-wide advocacy for funding reform.

Reaffirming the sector as the most effective provider of primary healthcare services for improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's health outcomes, David outlined key funding areas included in a budget bid put forward by QAIHC to Treasury.

David also provided an update on the Torres and Cape Health Care Commissioning (TORCH) Project, a 10-year project currently in the co-design phase involving community leaders from across the Torres, Cape, and NPA region alongside QAIHC, Queensland Health, and the Commonwealth. With the interim board soon

to be announced, and recruitment of a CEO currently underway, the TORCH entity will be a community controlled commissioning entity that has responsibility for planning and commissioning of all healthcare services, both primary and acute, in the region.

AGREED AGENDA ITEM ACTIONS:

- QAIHC to keep Members informed of budget bid updates.
- QAIHC to seek update from funding bodies, and opportunities to influence reform of, funding streams including IHP, PHN, ICT and workforce.



Network Strategy

Greg Richards General Manager, Policy and Research Division, QAIHC

Leading the final item on the Annual Members' Conference agenda, Greg Richards highlighted QAIHC's intention to re-establish and re-invigorate sector-wide networks. These had previously provided the platforms for two-way sharing of information between QAIHC and Members, and in many cases, they successfully facilitated timely, accurate, localised sharing of information to inform advocacy and strategic decision-making.

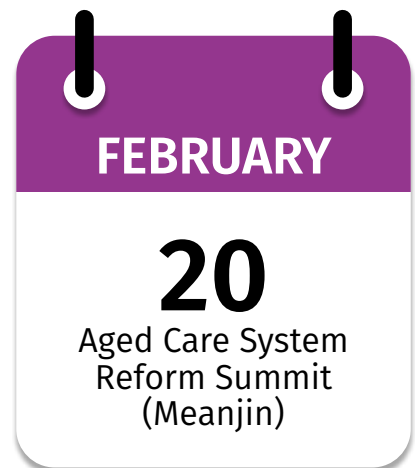
As a survey was distributed, participants were invited to share their views on the networks they felt should be a priority for QAIHC to establish as well as options for platforms and governance arrangements to maximise success.

AGREED AGENDA ITEM ACTIONS:

- QAIHC to circulate network strategy survey to all Members.
- Reflecting survey results, QAIHC to establish/re-establish priority networks.
- QAIHC to investigate options for strengthening two-way communications with Members, including platforms such as a Member portal.

SUMMARY OF NEXT STEPS

Please save the following dates in 2024



Do you have events coming up? QAIHC will support you in sharing your events and key dates across its networks. Contact us at: events@qaihc.com.au to discuss.



**Queensland
Aboriginal and Islander
Health Council**
ABN 97 111 116 762

BRISBANE

36 Russell Street, South Brisbane Q 4101
PO Box 3205, South Brisbane Q 4101
T 07 3328 8500

CAIRNS

6/516-518 Mulgrave Road, Earlville Q 4870
PO Box 12039, Westcourt Q 4870
T 07 4033 0570



qaihc.com.au