

Health Equity Strategy 2025–2028

Our journey so far

Children's Health Queensland (CHQ) has taken significant steps to drive systemic change and improve health and wellbeing outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people. With our *Health Equity Strategy 2022–2025* guiding us, together we have:

- Proudly embedded culture throughout our organisation by transforming the Cultural Capability and Recognition Program.
- Taken bold and impactful action to confront racism by proudly releasing a public Position Statement, launching an annual racism audit, created innovative HR tools to address racism complaints, and forged a groundbreaking research partnership with the Carumba Institute (Queensland University of Technology) to develop a transformative anti-racist education program for staff.
- Fostered a transformative partnership with the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health (IUIH), grounded in trust and shared vision, to enable co-commissioning, integrated workforce models, health information sharing, and the co-design of culturally responsive models of care.
- Improved life outcomes for more than 300 children by eliminating access barriers to ENT specialists in partnership with IUIH.
- Reimagined healing by co-designing a family sitting place (Jimbulang Nye-nan-ba) in the Queensland Children's Hospital for families to meet, share, wait, consult, yarn and practice culture. The sitting place is surrounded by art, toys, books, instruments, and furniture replicating a connection to Country through design.
- Revolutionised health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people by co-designing transformative models of care in emergency, respiratory, palliative care, cardiac surgery, the Ellen Barron Family Centre, Hospital in the Home (HiH) and hearing health.
- Consolidated our aspirations for building the workforce by launching a dedicated *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Action Plan 2024-2028* – marking a major milestone in boosting recruitment, retention, and leadership pathways for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff.
- Pioneered Queensland's first Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Talent Pool, creating more opportunities for Mob to enter Queensland Health's workforce.

Message from our leaders

At Children's Health Queensland, we remain dedicated to our commitment to delivering the best possible healthcare for every child and young person. As we build on our first Health Equity Strategy, we reflect on the progress we have made together – alongside communities and workforce – to strengthen a system that is equitable, culturally safe, and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Our journey has been one of listening, learning, and taking action. Since the launch of our first Health Equity Strategy in 2022, we have deepened our partnerships, worked to eliminate racism, and strengthened the workforce to reflect the communities we serve.

We acknowledge the dedication of CHQ staff, the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and families, and the leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled partners in shaping this progress.

This Health Equity Strategy reaffirms our commitment to self-determination in healthcare. We will continue to walk alongside Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, and their families to design, deliver, and evaluate services that are culturally safe, and patient-centered. Our responsibility is clear: we must embed health equity at every level and ensure that care is accessible and shaped by the wisdom and values of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Together we are building a future where every Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander child and young person has the opportunity to thrive.

Heather Watson Board Chair
Frank Tracey Chief Executive

“ Being healthy is a leading aspect of a good community, everyone deserves to be healthy. ”

Our strategic opportunities



Caring for the future cultural custodians

CHQ is committed to its role providing world-class care to the future custodians of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures in Queensland.



Strong partnerships

CHQ is a trusted partner in health equity with families, staff, and community stakeholders.



Employer of choice

Through the *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Action Plan 2024-2028*, CHQ will continue to increase the workforce commensurate to need across all CHQ services.



System leader in health equity

CHQ uses research and deploys culturally safe co-design techniques to lead innovative approaches to clinical leadership and health equity, contributing to systemic changes and improved health outcomes.



Children's Health Queensland pays respect to the Traditional Owners of the lands on which we walk, work, live and learn. We acknowledge and pay our respects to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders past, present and emerging.

PRIORITY AREA	PRIORITY AREAS	WHAT WE HEARD	WHAT WE WILL DO ABOUT IT	WE WILL KNOW WE ARE SUCCESSFUL WHEN
<p>Strengthen the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce</p>	<p>Actively eliminate racial discrimination and institutional racism</p>	<p>When we are culturally safe, we are healthy. We are proud of our cultures’ past and present. We want you to know us, see us and hear us.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to dismantle structures, policies and processes that disadvantage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. We will develop and implement an anti-racist educational intervention in partnership with QUT’s Carumba Institute. We will create formal mechanisms for addressing racism in the workplace. We will continue to strengthen cultural safety by embedding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander design throughout our places of care and work. 	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, staff, and stakeholders do not experience racism. Culture is embedded and celebrated throughout our places of care and work.</p>
<p>WHAT WE HEARD</p>	<p>Increase equitable access to healthcare services</p>	<p>We need services that are available, affordable and understand the unique challenges that face our communities. We need care closer to our communities.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will continue to address wait times and services not able to be provided for families needing care. We will explore options, including technology, to reduce access barriers and optimise opportunities to provide care. We will enhance access to paediatric care by improving networked and outreach models. We will improve engagement and collaboration with community-based primary care and specialist services including the community-controlled health sector. We will improve family experiences by coordinating better flow of care. 	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people are seen in clinically recommended times, have access to more community-led service models and their health journey is supported by strong partnerships between Children’s Health Queensland and other health services.</p>
<p>When our own Mob are part of the care that we receive, we feel safer. We want to be supported throughout our care journey by community members who share our lived experiences.</p>	<p>Influence the social, cultural, and economic determinants of health</p>	<p>Our family networks are strong and are important to cultural wellbeing. Sometimes, our family needs are complex, and we need healthcare workers to understand when broader services are required to support our family’s health journey.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will improve connection and referral pathways to community-based support services, such as MobLink. We will review and redesign our services and programs to better meet the needs of children in the justice system, out-of-home care or disconnected from school and community. We will improve informed decision-making for children and families by providing greater visibility on the options for care available to them. We will maximise opportunities to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander owned businesses to contribute more effectively to economic development. 	<p>Children and young people receive culturally safe, trauma-informed care that supports strong and connected families. Families are empowered and resourced to provide the best care for their children by integrating health care with other community support services.</p>
<p>WHAT WE WILL DO ABOUT IT</p>	<p>Deliver sustainable, culturally safe, and responsive healthcare services</p>	<p>We feel safe when health care providers understand how important culture is to our wellbeing. We are our child’s best carers; we need to be supported by having access to the right health information.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will improve post-discharge care with timely follow-up, providing the best opportunity for success after treatment. We will enhance care coordination by improving shared-care planning with health partners including the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Health Organisation (A&TICCHO) sector and other Hospital and Health Services across Queensland. We will take a focused approach to enhancing prevention at home by sharing informative health resources and increasing health literacy. We will embed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander perspectives into our research. 	<p>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families will have access to care closer to Country and will actively contribute to the design of new and modified care models, including health information resources.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will increase the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Liaison Officer, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner and health worker workforce. We will increase learning and development opportunities for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce to support their career aspirations. We will review existing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioner and health worker role descriptions to ensure they are supported to work at top of scope. We will implement the Racism Complaints Process to protect Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff in the workplace. We will implement the <i>CHQ Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Action Plan 2024-2028</i>. We will implement the <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nursing Workforce Plan</i>. 	<p>Work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to design, deliver, monitor, and review health services</p>	<p>We can help create equitable care that will work for our communities. Our communities are welcoming and vibrant, we can learn from each other by engaging more regularly and in more meaningful ways.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We will develop formal mechanisms to collaborate with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, including young people. We will continue to review and redesign services, in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and consumers to better meet the needs of the communities that we serve. We will develop unique approaches to understanding the experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients. 	<p>Our services are enhanced by the unique and diverse experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children, young people, and Elders.</p>
<p>WE WILL KNOW WE ARE SUCCESSFUL WHEN</p> <p>The knowledge and experiences of a culturally safe and self-determined Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce leads the care provided by Children’s Health Queensland.</p>				

“Remember, everybody’s story counts.”