

Office of the Chief Nurse Officer

2024 Year in Review



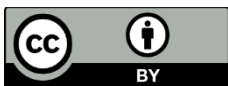
Improvement | Transparency | Patient Safety | Clinician Leadership | Innovation



Queensland
Government

Office of the Chief Nurse Officer 2024 Year in Review

Published by the State of Queensland (Queensland Health), 2025



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) **2025**

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:

Office of the Chief Nurse Officer, Department of Health, GPO Box 48, Brisbane QLD 4001, email ChiefNurse-Office@health.qld.gov.au.

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

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.

Contents

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Cultural Custodians	5
Caring and Connections Artwork.....	5
Chief Nurse Officer Foreword.....	6
About the Office of the Chief Nurse Officer.....	7
Vision	7
Mission	7
Strategic Priorities.....	7
Our Role.....	7
Our Teams.....	7
The Year in Review.....	8
Providing effective Governance and Stewardship.....	8
Establishing the new Office of the Chief Nurse Officer.....	8
OCNO Strategic Directions Forum	8
Our Year in Numbers.....	8
Key Functions.....	8
Facilitating nursing workforce sustainability	9
Nursing Workforce Summit and Nursing Workforce Action Plan	9
Facilitated the Statewide BPF Network.....	9
BPF Enhancements.....	9
Graduate Nurse and Midwife Portal	9
Industrial Collaborations	9
Legislated Nurse:Patient Ratio Reporting	9
Developing the capability of nurses	10
Optimising the Scope of Practice of nurses and midwives.....	10
Building Workforce Capability	10
Strength with Immersion Model (SwIM) Programs	10
Leadership Forums.....	10
Supporting innovative nursing practice models.....	11
Passionate about Practice Symposium 2024	11
Nurse Practitioner Navigation Showcase 2024.....	11
Nurse Practitioner Nurse Endoscopy program	11
EB 11 Scope of Practice Project nears completion	11
Nurse and Midwife Navigator Showcase 2024	11
Nursing and Midwifery Digital Community of Practice.....	11
Priority Projects – Government Election Commitments	12
GEC 1543 Improving Emergency Department Access Project.....	12
GEC 1558 Ratios Exploration	12
GEC 1544 Ratios Independent Evaluation	12
GEC 1545 Early Career Nurses and Midwives Retention Strategy	12
GEC 1546 Nurses and Midwives Report Card	12
GEC 1547 Nursing and Midwifery Professional Development.....	12
GEC 1554 Hire an extra 9,475 frontline health staff over the next four years including 5,800 nurses and midwives	12
Focusing on Mental Health, Alcohol and other Drugs nursing	13
Least Restrictive Way Nursing Leadership Forum	13
The MHAOD Transition Support Program	13

MHAOD Strength With Immersion Program	13
48th International Mental Health Nursing Conference.....	13
Creating positive change for First Nations nurses.....	14
Our Ways – First Nations Nurse Midwife and Student Workshop	14
NAIDOC Week: Keep the Fires Burning	14
CATSINaM Conference, October 2024.....	14
National and International Connections	15
National Contributions	15
International Contributions	15
International Collaborations	15
New Zealand Ratio Justice – He Tipua - Conference.....	15
Shaukat Khanum Cancer Symposium – Lahore Pakistan.....	15
Recognition of OCNO staff.....	16
Professional Contributions and Publications.....	16

Acknowledgement of Traditional Owners and Cultural Custodians

The Office of the Chief Nurse Officer (OCNO) respectfully acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Cultural Custodians of the lands, waters, and seas across Queensland. We pay our respects to Elders past and present, while recognising the role of current and future leaders in shaping a better health system.

We value the culture, traditions, and contributions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have made to our communities and recognise that our collective responsibility as government, communities and individuals is to ensure equity and equality, recognition, and advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland in every aspect of our society.

OCNO respectfully acknowledges the First Nations peoples in Queensland are both Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and supports the cultural knowledge, determination, and commitment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in caring for their health and wellbeing.

OCNO is located on the lands of the Yuggera and Turrbal people, in Meanjin (Brisbane).

OCNO is committed to supporting and building the First Nations Workforce within Queensland.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are advised that this publication may contain the names and/or images of deceased peoples.

Caring and Connections Artwork

Goreng Goreng artist Rachael Sarra was commissioned to design a custom artwork that reflects the vision that First Nations nurses and midwives are visible, valued and commensurate to need.

“We are birthed from the same shoulders that we stand on today. As we walk in two worlds, we are reminded of the strength of our culture. We are born into the hands of our ancestors as they carry our spirit from the past, into the present and through to the future. As we go on our journey, we listen, we acknowledge this is the same community that built our mothers, fathers and family that also raise us. From the moment our spirit reaches earth side, to the journey of navigating the world, and when we join our ancestors in the spirit world we are supported by nurses and midwives. We find comfort in the deep connection we have to our culture and the comfort and safety that is felt through caring; for one another, our communities and Country. We are supported, we are strong, we are surrounded by spirit. As nurses and midwives, we embrace the responsibility we have to mob, and we place culture and caring in the centre of everything we do”.



Chief Nurse Officer Foreword

I am pleased to present the first Office of the Chief Nurse Officer (OCNO) 2024 Year in Review. This Year in Review reflects the efforts of the nursing profession in collaboration with our partners within the public and private sector, international and national regulation bodies, professional associations, academic, education and industrial sectors.

On 23 August 2023, it was announced that the independent roles of Chief Nurse Officer and Chief Midwife Officer would be established with separate professional offices to support each profession with functional and organisational structures to accommodate. In July 2024, the new organisational realignment came into full effect. OCNO collaborates closely with all Queensland Health Professional Chiefs and Hospital Health Services to implement and embed system wide strategy and policy.

As the Chief Nurse Officer, I remain steadfast in leading the strategic direction of nursing services in Queensland. The vision is that nursing will provide leadership in forming and advancing policy in a world class health system that ensures a person's health needs and choices are prioritised, to deliver healthier sustainable communities.

Our office shares the accomplishments and successes of key initiatives and implementation of strategy that supports Queensland nurses to work to their full potential, taking carriage of opportunities to contemporise the way nurses contribute to care provision to ensure culturally safe, equitable and timely access to care alongside of our esteemed colleagues in a multi-disciplinary environment. As we reflect on the 2024 Year in Review, we acknowledge the continued dedication and expertise of our nursing profession and workforce, and celebrate the profession with acknowledgement of the year's achievements.

Kind regards

Shelley



*Adjunct Professor Shelley Nowlan
Chief Nurse Officer
Clinical Excellence Queensland*

About the Office of the Chief Nurse Officer

Vision

To drive policy development that prioritises the health needs and choices of Queenslanders, ensuring the delivery of sustainable outcomes for healthier communities.

Mission

The Office of the Chief Nurse Officer (OCNO) is leading government policy to ensure a healthy and sustainable future for Queenslanders. We achieve this through a strong, collaborative team culture, dedicated to empowering nurses and midwives to lead and apply innovation and evidence across diverse care settings.

Strategic Priorities

- Provide system-based leadership and advance policy that builds confidence and enables the nursing profession across Queensland to work to their full scope and capability.
- Ensure a sustainable, capable, contemporary, and supported nursing workforce across Queensland both now and for the next generation.
- Lead and inspire the nursing professions to embrace evidence-based practices and innovative approaches, ensuring the delivery of high-quality care, the adoption of contemporary practices, and enhanced health access for all Queenslanders.

Our Role

OCNO plays a key role in promoting and advocating for the nursing and midwifery professions, raising the profile of nurses, and highlighting the value they add to complex health and social systems. A primary mechanism for enabling this is through active partnerships, collaboration, and stakeholder engagement. In line with this, OCNO has goals to transform Queensland, innovate nationally, influence globally, and maintain a range of key relationships to realise these aims.

Our Teams

Governance and Stewardship

Provides structure, connectivity, and support. Facilitates the governance and stewardship of funding and resources in alignment with legislative and regulatory requirements, through high level strategic policy and operational advice and leadership to OCNO, the Department of Health, and Hospital and Health Services (HHSs).

Workforce Sustainability

Develops the nursing workforce through planning, workforce attraction and development plans to enable the delivery of a sustainable nursing workforce to meet the current and future health needs of Queenslanders.

Professional Capability

Provides expert strategic nursing leadership in relation to evidenced based policy development, regulation, legislation, education, and research in partnership with regulators, educators, universities, researchers and service providers to enable nurses to engage their full scope of practice.

Practice Innovation

Facilitates high level strategic development of practice models within the domains of leadership, management, education, clinical and research in an advisory and advocacy capacity. Informs nursing innovation through best practice models, role evolution, and advanced practice models.

Priority Projects

Provides support for priority projects of OCNO, and oversight of implementation on any government commitments relating to nursing.

Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs

Provides high level strategic leadership to identify, manage, implement, and evaluate statewide workforce strategies and reform activities to enhance the capacity and capability of the mental health alcohol and other drugs nursing workforce.

First Nations

Provides high level strategic leadership and workforce advice regarding strategies to increase First Nations nurses, co-design nurse led models of care, and address systemic and institutional racism. The First Nations Nursing Director works across all OCNO program areas and collaborates with the First Nations Health Office.

The Year in Review...

Providing effective Governance and Stewardship

2024 was a transformational year for OCNO with the Governance and Stewardship team leading the change process.

Establishing the new Office of the Chief Nurse Officer

In July 2024, the Office of the Chief Nurse Officer became operational.

The redesign of the Office of the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer into two distinct offices—one for nursing and one for midwifery—was the result of 12 months of planning and implementation. This was a significant change process that required careful consideration of the needs of staff and stakeholders. Part of implementation within the newly formed OCNO was to centralise administration staff into the Governance and Stewardship team to enable more effective administrative support to the program areas and Chief Nurse Officer. Key governance and business support processes essential to branch operations—such as human resources, finance and budgeting, correspondence management, and reporting—required updates. Additionally, various administrative arrangements needed to be revised, including email addresses, asset and other registers, and templates, due to the changes.

OCNO Strategic Directions Forum

The 2024 OCNO Strategic Directions Forum, led by the Governance and Stewardship team, was held in November to update the Strategic Plan.

The forum was held in the Queensland Health Edith Cavell building located in the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital heritage precinct; a 100-year-old beautifully restored building originally used as nurses' accommodation.

A highly productive forum, the team considered the nursing needs and priorities at an international, national, and state level, considered the strengths of OCNO and considered what opportunities for growth and innovation OCNO may be able to influence or facilitate. The outcome is a contemporary plan that will guide OCNO to provide leadership to create a supported and contemporary Queensland Health nursing profession that continues to meet community needs.

Our Year in Numbers

1762	Items of correspondence processed
113*	Meetings for which we have provided secretariat support (*including establishing OCNO)
4174	Candidates in the Graduate Portal managed
62	Routine operational reports actioned
28	Nursing and Midwifery educational forums facilitated
16	Projects managed or supported
3	Workshops arranged to plan the Office redesign
9	Number of people who make up the G&S team

Key Functions

- Strategy and operational planning
- Budget and finance management
- Reporting and compliance
- Audit and risk management
- Stakeholder engagement and communications
- Executive support to the Chief Nurse Officer
- Human resources support
- Project management support
- Travel arrangement support
- Sourcing and supply of data and information for informed decision making
- Other business support functions to ensure the smooth running of the office



Strategic Directions Forum – OCNO staff

Facilitating nursing workforce sustainability

Nursing Workforce Summit and Nursing Workforce Action Plan

In June, nursing leaders, academic and industrial partners participated in a Queensland Nursing Workforce Summit, successfully identifying and prioritising key actions for 2024-25. The *Queensland Nursing Workforce Action Plan* and the *Queensland First Nations Workforce Action Plan* integrate with the *Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032*. OCNO will work closely with HHS to implement the key actions.

Facilitated the Statewide BPF Network

The annual Business Planning Framework (BPF) Resource Network Forum provides Hospital and Health Services (HHS) nurse and midwife BPF leaders to collaborate regarding resource management workforce planning initiatives.

The November 2024 forum was a great success, featuring insightful discussions led by leaders from the Department of Health and HHS. Key topics included workforce planning, professional leadership, workforce key performance indicators and staff wellbeing. These important conversations highlighted our commitment to addressing current challenges and shaping a sustainable, future-ready workforce.

Further, the BPF EB11 Cultural Factors Working Group completed a strategic review and update of the environmental analysis section in the 6th edition of the BPF. Encouraging deeper consideration of the cultural factors that influence the roles and functions of services, the update emphasises the need to consider potential impacts of cultural factors on the workload of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees during annual business planning.

BPF Enhancements

Following evaluation findings of ratio trials undertaken in emergency departments, operating theatres, and prisoner health services, a range of recommendations were made to incorporate key components of the trial resourcing approaches into BPF addenda. Working with HHS and industrial partners, amendment were made to the existing addendum. It's expected the updated addendums will be released in early 2025. Key changes made include:

- emergency department addenda now includes specific references to roles such as access nurses, waiting room nurses and clinical leads.
- operating theatre addenda is now more clearly aligned with ACORN standards with respect to 1:3.5 staffing model per theatre session, as well

as identifies the critical role of access nurses to support the flow and care of patients within CSCF 6 PACU environments.

- prisoner health addenda includes additional components on improved benchmarking linked to acuity and volume of care.

Graduate Nurse and Midwife Portal

Ongoing work to improve graduate application rounds and processes continued during 2024, building on significant efforts across recent years to optimise these important processes. This core work will enable future plans to run multiple recruitment rounds per year, including a mid-year recruitment campaign, and commencement of a specific graduate process for enrolled nurses.

The OCNO worked closely with and supported three cluster HHSs—Central, Northern and Southern—to establish and implement a two-year rural and remote graduate pathway as part of the graduate application management process. In addition, there continues to be record levels of graduate applications and recruitment by HHSs, with 4,174 applications received for the 2025 Registered Nurse and Midwife Graduate Program. The first mid-year recruitment campaign will commence on 20 January 2025.

Industrial Collaborations

- Maintained positive relationships with industrial partners through supporting HHSs and working closely with NaMIG colleagues.
- Provided significant assistance to reviewing role descriptions for senior HHS nursing positions.
- Provided direct assistance as required from whole of system perspective to EDNM as required.

Legislated Nurse:Patient Ratio Reporting

Centralised responsibility and oversight for coordinating safe nurse to patient ratio reporting continues to sit within the Office. OCNO acknowledges the significant efforts and contributions of HHS peers and colleagues who support work to enable reporting of ratio data and to better demonstrate the safe care provided to patients and how this positively impacts on employees.

During 2024, groundwork has been put in place to see improved reporting processes in 2025. They are:

- Reduction in administrative burden for reporting in RACF, seeking to align with similar reporting processes across jurisdictions.
- Scoping improved ways to identify new in-scope wards and facilities.

Developing the capability of nurses

Optimising the Scope of Practice of nurses and midwives

2024 has seen a number of key amendments approved to the **Extended Practice Authorities (EPA)** for Registered Nurses (RN) (EPA-RN) and Midwives (EPA Midwives) that will result in positive impacts on clinical practice for nurses and midwives, and the overall standard of care for patients including:

- EPA-RN amended to include Cholera, Rabies (pre-exposure only), and Typhoid vaccines.
- Locations where RNs can administer vaccines under Part D of the EPA-RN were expanded to include aged care facility, general practice, and community pharmacy.
- EPA-Midwives amended to expand the list of vaccines by 13.
- Removal of some of the restrictions in the EPA-Midwives which were not regulatory in nature and align practice with the *Australian Immunisation Handbook and Immunisation Schedule Queensland*.
- Amendment to EPA-RN and EPA-Midwives to authorise a broad workforce to administer RSV preventative therapies including the RSV vaccine and monoclonal antibody (Nirsevimab).
- Amendment to EPA-RN and EPA-Midwives to authorise appropriately trained nurses and midwives to administer or give a treatment dose of a termination of pregnancy medicine (MS-2 Step).
- Removal of references to the previously mandated COVID-19 vaccination training program with registered nurses and midwives only required to meet the National Immunisation Education Framework for Health Professionals.

Medicines and Poisons Regulation (Medicines) 2021 (MPMR) Amendments

- Authorise Nurse Practitioners to deal with unapproved medicines including to prescribe, give a treatment dose, administer, and give a purchase order.

Building Workforce Capability

In FY 2023/2024 Professional Capability continued to build workforce capability to provide services by supporting the revision of the Intensive Care and Perioperative Transition Support Programs (TSPs), development of the education resource for medical termination of pregnancy (MToP) and rolling out the long-acting reversible contraception (LARC) training

to nurses and midwives across Queensland Health.

Strength with Immersion Model (SwIM) Programs

In 2024 our SwIM programs were once again very popular with a total of 94 participants completing a SwIM Program.

The SwIM programs empower early to mid-career nurses and midwives across Queensland by offering immersive clinical experiences in specialty areas. These programs enhance workforce capability and capacity by providing valuable learning pathways for lifelong education and career development.

This year's SwIM immersions included specialty areas such as: Critical Care at Townsville Hospital and Health Service (HHS), Paediatrics at Child's Health Queensland, Perioperative at Metro South HHS, Cancer Care at Metro North HHS, and Mental Health at Townsville HHS.

The positive impact of these programs is reflected in the feedback from participants and their Line Managers:

"This has been such a beneficial experience - my knowledge, understanding and exposure of how to do things differently has increased exponentially."

"[The applicant] has returned invigorated and full of fresh ideas and confidence."

Building on this success, the OCNO is proud to extend the SwIM programs into 2025, offering clinical immersion in the following areas:

Paediatric - Nov 2024 to Apr 2025 (CHQ HHS)

Critical Care - Jan to Jun 2025 (Townsville HHS)

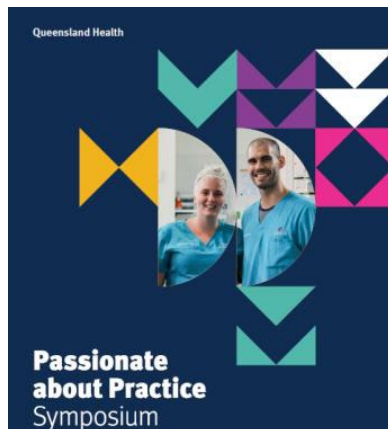
Mental Health - Jan to Dec 2025 (Metro North HHS)

Leadership Forums

Throughout 2024 Professional Capability continued to host the monthly Grand Rounds, monthly NUM/MUM Forum, and the quarterly EN Forum in conjunction with Hospital and Health Services. These forums provide professional development opportunities and access to best practice information to support clinical decision making and critical thinking as well as an opportunity to share current information on a range of nursing and midwifery trends and issues.

Supporting innovative nursing practice models

Passionate about Practice Symposium 2024



This annual event was held in Brisbane on 9 May 2024. The theme of the Symposium was *Passionate about Leading Change through Nursing and Midwifery Practice*. The Program was filled with nurses and midwives speaking about

the individual professions' shared passions, with topics such as Trauma Informed Care in action; Equity, equality, diversity, and inclusion; Vulnerable Homeless; Closing the Gap; and Rural and Remote practice. The event included a Celebration Hour where nurses and midwives from Queensland who had been recognised by a formal Award during the year had a chance to share their amazing work that attracted the Award. It was a fabulous way to mark International Day of the Midwife and International Nurses' Day.

Nurse Practitioner Navigation Showcase 2024

This inaugural event brought together Nurse Practitioners and Candidates from all over Queensland to share professional practice, practice development and patient stories. The theme of this Showcase was *Our nurses. Our future. The economic power of care* which highlighted the value that nurses contribute to the efficiency and efficacy of health services when working towards at optimal scope of practice.

Nurse Practitioner Nurse Endoscopy program

OCNO worked with a number of internal and external stakeholders to recommence this nurse practitioner training program to specialise in upper and lower endoscopy services. OCNO continues working with stakeholders and has secured funding for a second cohort of interested Nurse Practitioner Nurse Endoscopist candidates to commence in the 2025 academic year.

EB 11 Scope of Practice Project nears completion

OCNO continues to progress to completion, the EB11 Public Sector nurses and midwives Enterprise Bargaining Agreement Scope of Practice Project. The project so far has completed an enormous discovery into the structural and historical practice barriers to nurses working to full scope. Recommendations will align with the Australian Government Scope of Practice Review report, released in October 2024, focussing on the Queensland context.

Nurse and Midwife Navigator Showcase 2024



In 2016, the Government committed to implementing 400 Nurse and

Midwife Navigators throughout Queensland. In 2024, the Statewide Nurse and Midwife Navigator Showcase was held in Brisbane on 8 March. The theme of the showcase was *Creating connections for seamless care*. It was also the launch of the new Nurse and Midwife Navigator icon—a symbol that represents the special role of nurse and midwife navigators—strength, power, protection, connection, unbroken handovers, and a seamless circle of support. Navigators from across Queensland gathered together to share information about their models, role development, and case studies.

Nursing and Midwifery Digital Community of Practice

In recognition of the growing complexity and access to digital solutions within health in Queensland, the OCNO Practice Innovation team convened a Community of Practice comprising senior nurses and midwives from the Hospital and Health Services, nursing representatives from the Queensland Health Reform team, and eHealth Queensland. Together, they worked on developing a career pathway for specialist nurses in informatics and other digital services, enhancing the capability of all nurses to work in digital environments, and collaborating with Artificial Intelligence.

Priority Projects – Government Election Commitments

GEC 1543 Improving Emergency Department Access Project

This project explored contemporary models of care in EDs to optimise access and manage increasing demand for health services, staff fatigue and workload management. A report was delivered at project close, with some priority recommendations to be implemented, including a trial of Protocolised Care in the ED, commencing in early 2025.

GEC 1558 Ratios Exploration

Trials were undertaken for a six-month period to explore the expansion of minimum nurse-to-patient ratios and midwife-to-patient ratios in two emergency departments, one operating theatre, two prison health services, and one maternity ward across Queensland.

All trials concluded by or on 30 June 2023.

GEC 1544 Ratios Independent Evaluation

The ratio trials were independently evaluated by the Centre for the Business and Economics of Health in collaboration with the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Social Work, University of Queensland. The evaluation approach focused on the quadruple aim:

- Impact on the health of the target populations
- Impact on the patient experience of care
- Impact on practitioner experience of service delivery
- Impact on the overall cost of health care.

Following closure of the project, the recommendation that midwife to patient ratios be implemented was handed over to the Office of the Chief Midwife Officer. OCNO is progressing other recommendations in relation to the Business Planning Framework Addendums update for Emergency Department, Perioperative Services and Prison Health Services. OCNO Practice Innovation is coordinating the trial of Protocolised Care in the ED, as mentioned above in GEC 1543.

GEC 1545 Early Career Nurses and Midwives Retention Strategy

The Retention Strategy was approved on 11 April 2023. The four focus areas within the Strategy include:

- Implement Positive Practice Environment Standards for Nursing and Midwifery
- Provide education and professional development opportunities aligning with Lifelong Learning Framework
- Invest in leadership support, development, and training, and
- Develop workforce data systems to inform workforce planning.

GEC 1546 Nurses and Midwives Report Card

This project required collaboration with key stakeholders, including the Queensland Nurses and Midwives Union (QNMU), to develop a nursing and midwifery report card reflective of and incorporating the Positive Practice Environment Standards (PPES). The Nursing and Midwifery Working Environment Survey was developed, and nurses and midwives were invited to complete the survey in May 2024. Results of the survey have been distributed to the Hospital and Health Services for local implementation.

GEC 1547 Nursing and Midwifery Professional Development

The purpose of this project was to enhance existing professional development programs and design and implement new ones to help nurses and midwives gain new skills and qualifications, thereby increasing the capacity and capability of these professional groups. This program included developing programs in areas of strategic need within the health system, including mental health and palliative care. With the support of the Nursing and Midwifery Directors of Education Forum, a total of 17 projects related to this GEC were delivered, including the review and update of the Framework for Lifelong Learning for Nurses and Midwives. Additionally, the Supported Practice Framework for Nurses and Midwives, along with a Resource Toolkit, was developed.

GEC 1554 Hire an extra 9,475 frontline health staff over the next four years including 5,800 nurses and midwives

By 30 June 2024, Queensland Health exceeded the nursing and midwifery recruitment target of 5,800.

Focusing on Mental Health, Alcohol and other Drugs nursing

The OCNO Nursing Director, Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs (MHAOD) advisor role works collaboratively with the MHAOD Branches to deliver the mental health reform outlined in Better Care Together - a plan for Queensland's state-funded mental health, alcohol and other drug services to 2027.

Least Restrictive Way Nursing Leadership Forum

In March 2024, OCNO and the Office of the Chief Psychiatrist partnered to host a two-day Least Restrictive Way Forum. The event brought together a diverse group of statewide stakeholders to explore innovative approaches for reducing restrictive practices in mental health settings. On the second day of the forum, over 90 MHAOD nursing leaders from across the state gathered to identify strategies for building nursing leadership capability and to discuss evidence-based interventions to support least restrictive practices. This important initiative was funded by Better Care Together.

The MHAOD Transition Support Program

OCNO has funded a review of the MHAOD Transition Support Program that prepares nurses to work within the specialty areas of mental health and/or alcohol and other drugs. Planning for the review has commenced, and Kobie Hatch joined MHAOD Educators from across Queensland when they met in November to progress this important work.



Kobie Hatch (ND, MHAOD Advisor, OCNO) meeting with the MHAOD Nurse Educators at the TSP Planning Day.

MHAOD Strength With Immersion Program

The MHAOD Strength with Immersion (SwIM) program is funded by Better Care Together and supports early to mid-career nurses and midwives to develop mental health and/or alcohol and other drug nursing skills through clinical immersions. The MHAOD SwIM program was hosted in Townsville in 2024 and supported 12 rural, regional and remote nurses to gain MHAOD nursing experience, knowledge and skills. The program will continue in 2025 hosted by Metro North Health.

48th International Mental Health Nursing Conference

This annual conference is hosted by the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses (ACMHN). The 2024 Perth event was attended by more than 500 delegates. The conference provides an opportunity to network with national and international delegates and to share knowledge, experiences and ideas that contribute to better outcomes for the people that mental health nurses care for. The posters, presentations and conversations held throughout the conference reinforced the value and expertise of mental health nurses, and alcohol and other drug nurses, in improving the experience and care of people with lived and living experience.

It was a pleasure to see so many mental health nurses from Queensland in attendance, with many presenting papers and posters to showcase the great work that is being done across the state. Some of the work that OCNO has undertaken throughout the year was showcased by the following paper presentations:

- Hatch, K. & Dart, N. *Queensland and the least restrictive way.*
- Lock, M. *Mental health nursing: Strength with immersion program.*



Kobie Hatch (ND, MHAOD Advisor, OCNO) and Nathan Dart (DoN, Metro North Mental Health) presenting on the Least Restrictive Way at the ACMHN conference in Perth



Creating positive change for First Nations nurses

Our Ways – First Nations Nurse Midwife and Student Workshop

The annual Our Ways nurse, midwife and student workshop provides an opportunity to increase visibility and appreciation of First Nations nursing and midwifery initiatives, build a peer network and vision, and plan for a better future in a culturally safe environment.

On 7 June 2024, the workshop was attended by over 60 nurses, midwives and students. It provided an opportunity to showcase the contributions of current First Nations nurses and midwives, and to inspire future First Nations nurses and midwives.

Following a series of innovative and thought-provoking keynote speakers, a showcase allowed participants to share their work and achievements with their colleagues in line with this year's NAIDOC theme, Keep the Fire Burning: Blak, Loud and Proud.

Undergraduate nursing and midwifery students enrolled in the Deadly Start Program spoke about their experience and motivation to train to be a nurse or midwife. Overall, students spoke of a positive experience and a desire to connect with more QH First Nations staff during their clinical placements.

NAIDOC Week: Keep the Fires Burning

Hosted by Evolve Communities leaders, Aunty Munya and Carla, OCNO, the Office of the Chief Midwifery Officer and the Office of the Chief Allied Health Officer attended a webinar to discuss and explore this year's NAIDOC Week theme of "Keep the Fires Burning", including practical actions for Allies to "keep the fires burning" and key principles all Australians can learn from First Nations wisdom. The webinar was well attended and was a great opportunity to network with other Chief Offices.

Also hosted by Evolve Communities, OCNO attended a Yarning Circle Workshop that was based on the Seven Steps to Practical Reconciliation™ Framework. The objectives of the program include building cultural competency, building greater awareness and understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, and developing confidence and skills to work alongside First Nations people, businesses, and communities. Each participant was encouraged to take a personal journey of reflection on understanding their own assumptions and level of privilege with a view to understanding how to become an Ally for First Nations people. The workshop included important conversations on subjects such as the stolen generation and included interviews with First Nations people talking about stereotypes and myth busting. This workshop was a safe space to ask questions

and improve awareness of cultural safety within OCNO.

CATSINaM Conference, October 2024

Held in Fremantle Walyup, Western Australia, the Congress of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Nurses and Midwives (CATSINaM) conference was attended by Nicole Tukana, A/Nursing Director, First Nations.

Attending the conference as an Aboriginal nurse is a significant opportunity that offers numerous personal and professional benefits. Providing a unique chance to embrace the power of unity with fellow Indigenous healthcare professionals, the experience fosters a deep cultural connection. This gathering allows for the discovery of transformative advancements in Indigenous healthcare, contributing substantially to professional growth. Moreover, the conference is an ideal platform to advocate passionately for Mob, ensuring their voices and needs are represented with pride and dedication. It also enables the forging of meaningful connections with professionals who are equally committed to making a positive difference in healthcare. This experience deepens the commitment to both the nursing profession and community, providing profound personal fulfillment. Additionally, the wisdom imparted by speakers and the collaborative spirit of the workshops serve as powerful sources of inspiration.

In essence, the CATSINaM conference is a celebration of First Nations identity, a catalyst for cultural and professional dedication, and a significant step toward achieving greater health equity for Mob in communities.

(L to R)
Melina
Connors
(First Nations
Midwifery
Director,
Office of the
Chief Midwife
Officer) and
Nicole
Tukana
(A/Nursing
Director, First
Nations,
OCNO)
attend the
CATSINaM
Conference



National and International Connections

To achieve the OCNO vision of healthier Queenslanders, it's necessary to collaborate and contribute with International and National jurisdictions to explore new innovative, contemporary ways to deliver healthcare. Collectively these stakeholder groups collaborate and participate in contributing to strategic workforce leadership, policy development and legislative and regulatory reforms.

OCNO's involvement in these strategic discussions and decisions has contributed significantly to building Queensland's reputation as a leader in this important domain of health.

National Contributions

- Shelley Nowlan, Chief Nurse Officer, currently serves as the Chair of the Australian and New Zealand Council of Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officers (ANZCCNMO) for a two-year term.
- She is also the current Chair of the Queensland Nursing and Midwifery Executive Council (QNMExC)
- Additionally, Shelley co-chairs the Council of Deans/Heads of Nursing and Midwifery Schools.
- In 2024, OCNO contributed to the following:
 - National Nursing and Midwifery Education Advisory Network
 - National Midwifery Strategic Reference Group
 - Nursing and Midwifery Implementation Group
 - Executive Director of Nursing and Midwifery
 - National Nursing Forum
 - Qld Rural and Remote Clinical Network 2024 Annual Forum
 - Qld Nursing Workforce Summit
 - Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery Symposium
 - Australia and New Zealand School of Government Deputies Leadership Program
 - Registered Nurse Prescribing
 - Integrated Workforce Management (IWM)
 - Mental Health Nursing conference
 - Australian College of Nursing conference
 - Queensland Mental Health Commission Leading Reform Summit
 - National Nursing Strategy
 - National Nurse Practitioner Plan
 - Implementation plan for the National Scope of Practice Primary Health Care

International Contributions

In May 2024, Shelley was the online delegate to the International Council of Nurses World Health

Assembly, and contributed to discussions on climate change, health economics, and health for all with nursing being a fair and equitable solution.

Shelley is an alumnus of the Global Nursing Leadership Institute and maintains connections with British Columbia, Canada, where she offers expert guidance on Queensland's experience with implementing nurse-to-patient ratios and the Business Planning Framework.

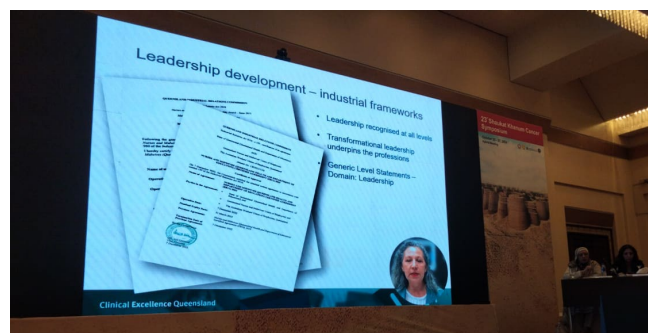
International Collaborations

New Zealand Ratio Justice – He Tipua - Conference

In July 2024, Shelley presented at the New Zealand Ratio Justice – He Tipua – conference, hosted by the New Zealand Nurses Organisation in Wellington. The theme was *Nurse-to-patient ratios, a new direction for Aotearoa New Zealand*.

Shelley spoke of the Queensland Nursing and Midwifery Business Planning Framework (BPF) and the legislated staffing requirements. She explained how the BPF has been used in Queensland for over 20 years, and how the BPF describes legislated or notional nurse or midwife to patient ratios, and where they apply. Shelley also discussed the results of the extended ratio trials OCNO project managed, exploring expansion of ratios in emergency departments, operating theatres, prison health services and maternity wards and the next steps that will occur following the outcomes of the project evaluation.

Shaukat Khanum Cancer Symposium – Lahore Pakistan



Shelley Nowlan, CNO, virtually presenting at Shaukat Khanum Cancer Symposium in Pakistan

Shelley was invited by the Shaukat Khanum Memorial Cancer Hospital & Research Centre in Pakistan to present (virtually) on nursing leadership

at their annual educational symposium, presenting the inaugural *Queensland Health Leadership Strategy for Nurses and Midwives*.

The Leadership Strategy provides guidance for a coordinated approach to developing, supporting, and enhancing leadership capability and capacity for all classifications within the nursing and midwifery professions. By empowering leadership at all levels, we foster a culture and profession of high-performing,

innovative and future-focused nurses and midwives, capable of making a positive difference to all Queenslanders.

Shelley spoke to the Graduate Certificate in Gastroenterology initiative, where OCNO has partnered with QUT to support advanced education in gastroenterology for RNs. The audience were fully engaged, and the information was well-received.

Recognition of OCNO staff



Kobie Hatch, Nursing Director, MHAOD Advisor, received her Fellowship to the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses at the 48th International Mental Health Nursing conference, in recognition of her significant contributions to mental health nursing and to the Australian College of Mental Health Nurses.

Kobie Hatch (Nursing Director, MHAOD Advisor, OCNO) and Professor Rhonda Wilson (President, Australian College of Mental Health Nurses)

Professional Contributions and Publications

Higgins, N., Jones, L., Hutton, T., Dart, N., Fawcett, L. & Muir-Cochrane, E. (2024) Survey of staff experiences of potential stigma during the COVID19 pandemic. *International Journal of Mental Health Nursing*, 00, 1–13. Available from: <https://doi.org/10.1111/inm.13284>

Winterton R (presenting), Craswell A, Watson K, Baker J, Coates K, Zande-Wilkins A. 2024. Australian Association of Gerontology. 57th AAG Conference. Fresh Air, Fresh Thinking. 12-15th November. Hobart, Tasmania. Poster Presentation.

OCNO 2024 Year In Review

For more information contact:

Office of the Chief Nurse Officer, Department of Health GPO Box 48 Brisbane QLD 4001

Email ChiefNurse-Office@health.qld.gov.au

Phone: 07 3328 9830