

HEALTH WORKFORCE STRATEGY

for Queensland to 2032

Investment Plan



Queensland
Government

Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032 Investment Plan

The health workforce strategy identifies three focus areas, underpinned by key strategies, which have been shaped by data, research and valuable input from almost 800 stakeholders across more than 160 organisations.

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Queensland Health respectfully acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Owners and 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 the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have made to our communities and recognise that our collective responsibility as government, communities and individuals are to ensure equity and equality, recognition and advancement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in Queensland in every aspect of our society.

Queensland Health 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.

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

Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women



We're lucky to already benefit from a broad, diverse, skilled, and dedicated workforce that provides world-class healthcare to our community each and every day. The *Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032* is an acknowledgement of the tireless efforts of our health workforce, in both clinical and non-clinical sectors. They support Queenslanders when they need it most, and in return we must support them.

This Strategy is also a commitment to addressing the challenges in delivering healthcare; challenges which are being felt worldwide. Increasing demand for services and pressure on workforce supply channels, especially in rural and remote locations, must be addressed. To ensure this strategy brings about real change, our Government has identified a range of workforce initiatives as investment priorities, in consultation with staff and stakeholders, and now detailed in this Investment Plan.

The Queensland Government is committing \$1.7 billion to support this platform of bold initiatives. This funding aims to retain our current workforce, build and attract new talent pipelines, and innovate new ways to deliver healthcare. This investment builds on the significant achievements to date, including hiring over 23,000 frontline health staff and launching the Workforce Attraction Incentive Scheme in 2023.

However, there is still much more to do. Through extensive stakeholder engagement, we have identified our critical priorities: enhancing permanent employment opportunities, developing new talent sources across priority areas, attracting and growing our First Nations workforce, supporting multi-disciplinary teams in implementing new models of care, strengthening relationships with stakeholders across the health system, and integrating technology to enhance service delivery and accessibility.

Valuable input and feedback from nearly 800 stakeholders across more than 160 organisations have shaped the new *Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032*. I extend my heartfelt thanks to the staff, professional associations, trade unions, education and training providers, government and non-government organisations, and consumers who contributed to this vital Strategy.

Achieving success requires strong collaboration with our partners to implement system improvements for the healthcare workforce and our consumers. As emphasised during our consultations, the interdependence of retaining our workforce, building and attracting talent pipelines, and fostering innovation is crucial to establishing a sustainable health workforce now and in the future.

This Investment Plan reflects the Government's commitment to addressing the challenges facing our healthcare system, supporting our current workforce, and building a workforce for the future.

Shannon Fentiman



Our aim is to attract, retain and support a homegrown health workforce that will deliver world-class healthcare across Queensland.

Principles

The investment initiatives outlined in this document will attract and build a refreshed health workforce for Queensland. They also enable effective and supportive work environments; increased diversity and inclusivity; enhanced permanent employment opportunities; and open avenues to attract and retain health workers in areas of need, particularly in rural, regional and remote Queensland.

Implementation of these initiatives are guided by the following principles:

- Through strong leadership, we will enable flexible and supportive work environments that aim to prevent violence, retain employees, and create a sustainable workforce into the future.
- We will pursue the development of new and emerging clinical, multi-disciplinary, general, and clinical support roles in collaboration with employees, unions, associations and education providers, to increase the supply of a skilled health workforce.
- Working with our partners, we will design digitally enabled, and innovative 'place-based' workforce design solutions to build a sustainable workforce, particularly for regional, rural, and remote locations.

Priority focus areas

The Queensland Government is committed to building a supported workforce to deliver high-quality healthcare across Queensland; delivered through the *Health Workforce Strategy for Queensland to 2032* (health workforce strategy).

The health workforce strategy sets out strategies under three focus areas:

- Support and retain the current workforce.
- Build and attract new pipelines of talent.
- Adapt and innovate new ways to deliver.

System reform outcomes

Through the implementation of this health workforce strategy, we expect the following outcomes to be achieved by 2032:

- A valued and empowered workforce that is designed, enabled and skilled to deliver world-class healthcare where and when needed to service areas of need and consumer demand.
- Sustained increases in health workforce supply pipelines through the establishment of new health workforce supply channels from intrastate, interstate and overseas with reduced barriers entering the state's health system, and the enhancement of existing ones.
- New and existing health workers have improved multi-disciplinary career pathways with access to leadership, professional and career development opportunities to promote retention across all roles and locations.
- Innovative healthcare solutions based on new and technology-integrated models of care and workforce data to support strategic workforce planning are shared across the state's health system.

New investment overview

Budget to budget, we are spending over **\$1 billion (\$1.059B)** more growing our frontline workforce. This equates to full time equivalent growth of more than 700 extra doctors, more than 2,600 nurses and midwives, and more than 1,000 allied health staff across budgets. This is a huge investment in our staff and the Queenslanders they help everyday.

Our vision is that our people will be working to optimal scope of practice, and delivering services in efficient, caring, culturally appropriate, and effective ways. The professional development needs, aspirations, and wellbeing of the workforce will be high priorities, and workplace cultures will be positive and supportive. Supporting this will be effective, empowered and engaged leadership from within the health setting.

These new initiatives build on existing investments to achieve an agile, skilled, and valued workforce.



Support and retain the current workforce

total investment of **\$387.76 million**



Build and attract new pipelines of talent

total investment of **\$96.85 million**



Adapt and innovate new ways to deliver

total investment of **\$182 million**



Headline initiative	Total to 2027-2028
Increase security officer roles by up to 70 full-time equivalent (FTE) and ambassador roles by up to 12 FTE across Queensland's hospital and health services (HSSs) in line with capital expansion programs, increased demand and changing models of care. Supporting this workforce cohort, we will continue to implement a range of effective security enhancements such as the installation of CCTV in all high-risk areas, providing swipe card access for all high-risk areas, installing fixed duress alarms and providing staff with personal duress alarms in high-risk areas, and the provision of body worn cameras for all security staff. In addition, we will expand the ambassador program and roll out enhanced training for security and ambassador staff.	\$36M
Creating a nurse practitioner pipeline by establishing Nurse Practitioner candidate roles across Queensland hospital and health services. This investment focuses on building a sustainable primary treating clinician health workforce.	\$3.1M
Bolster Queensland's primary care service by incentivising trainees to undertake general practitioners (GP) training. This investment of \$40,000 per trainee is designed to attract and retain GP trainees across Queensland.	\$24M
The nuclear medicine scientist workforce pipeline supports the small but critical nuclear medicine scientist workforce within Queensland Health through the introduction of scholarships and graduate program.	\$2.85M
The Diploma of Nursing student placement program supports students to complete clinical placements, recognising their value to the nursing workforce.	\$15.9M
This initiative focuses on creating additional GPA training positions to support rural generalist and GP trainees to undertake advanced diploma training in anaesthetics. Training positions will commence January 2025.	\$5.25M
An increased Allied Health Workforce Development Officer workforce will be delivered to areas with large predicted growth. These roles are pivotal in supporting the development, capability and sustainability of the allied health workforce.	\$1.76M
Develop and implement statewide occupational violence prevention initiatives to address occupational violence in Queensland's hospital and health services.	\$1.89M
Replace existing staff accommodation in the Torres and Cape HHS to ensure it is safe, appropriate, and fit-for-purpose.	\$12M
The proposed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Certified Agreement (No. 2) contains a range of critical new arrangements and enhancements for Queensland Health's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce by leading the nation in competitive compensation, development support, incentives, and additional aid for the workforce in remote areas. The investment will also support cultural leave of up to 10 paid days.	\$114.8M
Grow the First Nations talent pipeline , recognise and support our current workforce, and adapt our ways of working to deliver more equitable services to increase the number of First Nations health care professionals, improve cultural competency and better coordinate ways of working to deliver more equitable services.	\$30.8M
To support the uptake of research and clinical trials closer to home for regional, rural, and remote patients by increasing research and clinical trial coordinator positions across Queensland Health. This initiative supports translating research into practice which continuously improves quality of care.	\$5M

Headline initiative	Total to 2027-2028
Introduction of 10 days per annum (non-cumulative) paid reproductive health leave for workers, including for each parent to receive fertility/In Vitro Fertilisation (IVF) treatment; chronic reproductive health conditions; preventative screening associated with reproductive health; and treatment associated with reproductive health.	\$160M
Continued support of ongoing service delivery due to staff accessing special pandemic leave in relation to the coronavirus disease. Special pandemic leave arrangements for employees are set out in the Minister for Industrial Relations and Commission Chief Executive Directive 01/20: Employment arrangements in the event of a health pandemic (Directive 01/20).	\$29M
Leadership and capability uplift will help ensure the health workforce is supported to deliver high-quality healthcare across Queensland through a strengthened approach to workforce capability and leadership development. A statewide coaching, mentoring, and peer support program, with a focus on rural and remote will also be introduced.	\$2.3M
This initiative is to support the introduction of minimum midwife to post-natal patient ratio in public hospital post-natal wards (Clinical Services Capability Framework levels 5 and 6 only). The minimum midwife to post-natal patient ratios will provide patients and families with a safe, individualised and responsive, culturally appropriate maternity care.	\$5.08M
The early career dental practitioners' program is designed to better support and develop new skills and recent dental and oral health therapy graduates required for public sector dentistry. The program will include work rotations, mentoring, peer support and professional development, to enhance recruitment and retention of dental practitioners in oral health services, particularly in rural, regional and remote locations.	\$2.09M
The development and implementation of programs which prioritise the health and wellbeing of our staff . Programs will focus on vicarious trauma support, mental health first aid, managing psychosocial hazards, conflict resolution, and building resilience to workplace stress. In addition, there will be an expansion of the suite of wellbeing initiatives for medical students and doctors across Queensland.	\$3.25M
Enable pharmacists to complete additional training to support the state-wide rollout of the Queensland Community Pharmacy Scope of Practice Pilot . This includes completion of prescribing training and clinical practice training, delivered by accredited education providers. This pilot enables participating pharmacists to treat and prescribe medicines for common health conditions and wellbeing services and will increase the number of healthcare options for Queenslanders living in regional, rural and remote parts of the state. It is anticipated services will be in place across the state from early 2025, and the Pilot will continue until June 2026.	\$6M
Advance the future medical imaging workforce model in acknowledgement of the critical role medical imaging plays in outpatient, inpatient and emergency care across multiple clinical specialities and in supporting clinicians in diagnosis, patient treatment, and intervention.	\$12.56M
Implement a multidisciplinary diabetes workforce implement a multidisciplinary diabetes workforce uplift in regional areas to support improved diabetes service provision.	\$7.81M
Implementation of formalised networked oral health service delivery arrangements across Queensland's hospital and health services to enable service sustainability and continuity in rural and remote locations, including metro and regional-based oral health positions that work on a regular or rotational basis in rural and remote locations.	\$1.79M
Expansion of the current Workforce Attraction Incentive Scheme to increase our workforce across Queensland. Health workers from interstate or overseas who move to Queensland may be eligible for payments under this scheme.	\$40M

Headline initiative	Total to 2027-2028
The high school to employment career pathways program will support graduate, traineeship, internship, cadetship, disability employment, multicultural employment, and other employment programs. Whether the individual is a high school student, school leaver, early career, graduate or career changer, there is a pathway into employment and further education and training.	\$1.93M
The establishment of two new trainee registrar positions to support the uplift in frontline maternity and termination of pregnancy staffing levels . This investment complements initiatives funded through the \$42M to support birthing for women from remote, regional and rural areas.	\$1.83M
The Queensland Government is investing \$44M over four years to establish a new statewide adult forensic examination model of care . This initiative is part of a new sexual assault response service for persons aged over 14 years, which aims to provide consistent, timely, and high-quality forensic medical services to all victims of sexual violence across Queensland. This will support the delivery of these services and an education and training program to support building this workforce pipeline. This funding will ensure the availability of a trauma-informed and a culturally competent workforce, reinforcing our commitment to delivering compassionate and comprehensive care to those affected by sexual violence. This model of care responds to the findings of the "Hear Her Voice – Report 2" and the Commission of Inquiry into Forensic DNA Testing in Queensland.	\$44M
Queensland Health rosters approximately 916,000 shifts every fortnight in an ever changing and responsive 24/7 environment and produces on average over 142,000 pays each fortnight. This initiative supports the continued roll out of the Integrated Workforce Management Program (IWFM) electronic rostering, providing Queensland Health with a single workforce management platform to inform strategic workforce planning and efficient workforce management decision making.	\$64M
An increased demand for refugee health services in Queensland necessitates additional nursing staff to alleviate barriers for refugees in accessing healthcare services.	\$3.12M
Introduce and expand Multicultural Health Liaison Officer roles across community and other health services. The investment aims to deliver improved patient outcomes by providing culturally sensitive support to them and their families.	\$4M
Create identified employment positions for People with disability and deliver training focused on general disability awareness and programs to support people with disability.	\$2.34M
To support health and language services , implement a centralised booking system to enable equitable access to healthcare for Queensland's culturally and linguistically diverse population.	\$0.9M
Implement a coordinated single point of entry into the coronial system; a statewide Family Support Unit to provide a single point of contact for families navigating the coronial process; and help build a sustainable and responsive statewide workforce to improve coronial services .	\$8.27M
To support good sexual health which contributes to overall good health and wellbeing. This investment supports enhanced delivery of evidence-based, innovative, and inclusive sexual health programs and services as well as additional clinical appointments at fixed clinic locations and enhanced capacity to deliver in-reach and outreach services in high growth outer metropolitan, regional and remote areas.	\$12.92M

Existing investment

Our new investment builds on the existing investment initiatives as outlined in this section under three priority areas – hiring, retention and attraction.

Hiring

In 2021, Queensland's record \$22.2 billion health budget was announced, a 3.4% increase on the 2020-21 financial year. The focus, recruiting frontline staff, building health infrastructure, reducing emergency and surgical wait times, and continuing to protect the state from COVID-19.

The investment focused on an extra 9,475 frontline health staff over four years comprising:

- 5,800 nurses and midwives
- 1,500 doctors
- 1,700 new allied health professionals
- 735 ambulance operatives (paramedics).

In January 2024, the targets for an additional 1,500 doctors and 1,700 allied health professionals were met. As of March 2024:

- Nurses and midwives achieved 97% of their target (5,608 FTE against target of 5,800 FTE)
- Ambulance operatives achieved 87% of their target (642 FTE against target of 735 FTE).

Retention

- In August 2022 the Queensland Government announced its Public Sector Wages Policy covering employees with wage increases of 4% in the first year of the agreement, 4% in the second and 3% in the third.
- Implementation of the Mind (re)set online wellbeing education and training program

for junior doctors. The program provides strategies for mental health wellbeing and burnout mitigation, practising self-care and managing workload stress.

- Implementation of the Rural Doctors Upskilling Program (RDUP) to support the development and maintenance of a skilled general practice and rural generalist workforce to meet the medical service needs of regional, rural and remote Queensland.
- Nurses and midwives professional development programs established, such as the Framework for Lifelong Learning for Nurses and Midwives and the Supported Practice Framework for Nurses and Midwives Resource Toolkit.
- Occupational violence prevention through programs such as:
 - Peer support program which focusses on staff wellbeing and promoting meaningful relationships between peers.
 - The introduction of Ambassadors, a non-clinical point of contact for patients, visitors and consumers.
 - Body worn cameras (BWC) for on-duty Security Officers. A BWC is a wearable audio, video or photographic recording device.
- Continuation of the Office of the Rural and Remote Health to provide a strong voice in the development of statewide policy, strategy and planning, and to foster stronger and more resilient health care in Queensland's rural and remote communities. The office is leading the Single Employer Model Pilot Project, a medical

workforce initiative designed to enable more general practice and rural generalist registrars training in regional, rural and remote communities to maintain the benefits of being employed by one employer, including accrual of leave entitlements.

- Developed Queensland Health's Digital Passport, designed to support staff mobility across the system by having human resources, credentialing and mandatory training information in one place.
- Enhanced maternity services program, ALICE, to assist all multi-disciplinary clinicians working in public maternity services.
- Midwife-led and midwife supported models of care in regional communities along with the appointment of Queensland's first Chief Midwife Officer to drive maternity reforms across Queensland.
- Launched an independent review into workplace harassment in hospitals, led by Elizabeth Broderick AO.
- Commitment to work with our industrial partners to review the staffing model for Health Practitioners.
- \$1.4 million to Townsville HHS to run an International Medical Graduate orientation and preparation program, with a focus on supporting the wellbeing of this workforce.
- \$0.42 million for a Medical Education and Wellbeing Registrar to support the medical workforce for Central Queensland and Wide Bay Regional Medical Pathway.



Attraction Initiatives

- Expansion of health traineeships for Queensland school students resulting in 219 trainees (73% of the 300 target across the system. Of note, 125 were Deadly Start trainees with 58 trainees in regional, rural and remote locations.
- Reinvigoration of the Nurse Practitioner Nurse Endoscopy program through QUT.
- The Workforce Attraction Incentive Scheme was introduced, providing eligible interstate and international health practitioners up to \$20,000 to move to and work in southeast Queensland and up to \$70,000 to work in regional and remote Queensland.
- Launching the #GoHealth Campaign to promote more young Queenslanders to take up a career in the public health sector.
- The introduction of the cost-of-living allowance for final year nursing and midwifery students undertaking placements.

- Funding of 20 places for general practitioners and rural generalists to complete an advanced diploma in obstetrics.
- The introduction of end-to-end medical pathways in conjunction with the University of Queensland to attract junior doctors to rural and remote Queensland — particularly general practice. These pathways are located in:
 - Central Queensland and Wide Bay regions which commenced 2023 with an initial cohort of 61 student.
 - Darling Downs and South West regions which commenced 2024 with an initial cohort of 35 students.
- To help grow the Torres Strait health workforce, there was an investment to support scholarships for young First Nations people from Torres and Cape studying health related degrees at James Cook University (JCU).

Implementation and monitoring

It is important to recognise that each stakeholder plays a role in achieving the objectives, strategies and initiatives outlined in the health workforce strategy and this investment plan.

Queensland Health will work closely with key stakeholders to progress a system-level approach to achieve a dynamic and responsive health system where our workforce is valued and empowered to provide world-class healthcare to all Queenslanders.

Queensland Health commits to collaborate with stakeholders to:

- Establish key performance indicators to measure the effectiveness in implementing the health workforce strategy.
- Evaluate the impact of the strategies, on a two-yearly basis, during the life of the health workforce strategy.





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