



QDGP • GPQ • CHECKUP



CHECKUP

IMPACT

Issue 5, September 2018



The 20th Anniversary Edition

Our Vision, Purpose & Values



Vision

Better health for people and communities that need it most.

Purpose

To create healthier communities and reduce health inequities.

Values



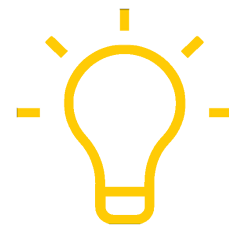
Collaboration

We are proactive in building long term, mutual and respectful partnerships with external organisations.



Excellence

We are solutions focussed and results driven to meet the needs of our customers.



Innovation

We are forward thinking; we embrace change and seize opportunity.



Integrity

We are transparent and honest in our actions and invest in socially responsible solutions.



Compassion

We act with care and consideration in all our interactions; everyone matters.

CONTENTS



6

The early years - QDGP



8

General Practice Queensland



10

Today and the future - CheckUP Australia



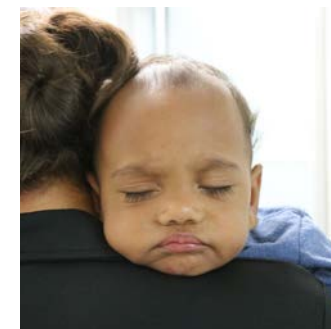
12

Tucka-Time



16

Outreach statistics



18

Life changing surgery for Yarrabah children



24

Our Reconciliation Action Plan



29

Thank you to our 2017-2018 members

A word from our Chief Executive Officer



Ann Maree Liddy

Welcome to our fifth edition of IMPACT magazine. This is a special edition, celebrating our 20th year of operations incorporating our journey as QDGP, GPQ and CheckUP. This edition showcases a diversity of initiatives both from our past and looking towards the future.

A consistent feature across our 20 year history is the importance we place on working collaboratively – with our members, stakeholders and the broader community. We have learned that improving the health and well-being of local communities can't be achieved in isolation – it requires genuine and deliberate commitment to working in partnership with others. The stories in this publication reinforce the power of collaborative approaches, including benefits such as reducing duplication, fostering innovation and building on local know-how.

The achievements of the past 20 years would not have happened without the engagement and commitment of our service partners and stakeholders. Thank you to the many service provider organisations and individual providers for your unwavering commitment and willingness to work alongside us to improve the health of rural and remote communities across Queensland. Thank you also to our funders and partners for your ongoing support and encouragement. We are proud to work with you.

To have a 20 year history as an organisation requires incredible people in your organisation. I am very grateful to work every day with a group of talented, passionate and caring people. A huge thank you and congratulations to all past and present staff and Board Directors who have been such an integral part of our journey to date. The dedication and hard work of every one of you has been critical to our success. With your support, we have chartered some challenging times; to emerge a stronger and more resilient organisation with a clear vision for the future and a quiet determination to make a difference.

Here's to the next 20 years!

Reflections from our Board



When I reflect about CheckUP, and the work we do, I am always struck by the absolute commitment, passion and dedication the team brings to their jobs each and every day. We are all focussed on making a difference to those people and communities that need it most. Coupled with an outstanding work ethic, a professional approach and integrity second to none makes me very proud to be associated with CheckUP, honoured to be a member of the Board and a privilege to be the Chairman.

Colin Duff
CheckUP Board Chair



CheckUP is about "creating healthier communities". Our outreach programs are a flagship for our much-needed focus on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. We are proud to have provided over 170,000 occasions of service in 194 communities in the last financial year. It has been a journey of many years and I am delighted to be a part of this process. We have grown in many ways and in this, our 20th year, we celebrate the successes of the past and look forward to the future.

Dr Roger Halliwell
CheckUP Board Director

“CheckUP is committed to creating healthier communities and reducing health inequities.”



I welcome the commitment of the Executive team and the high standard of professionalism and reputation that has been garnered through their efforts in the health sector. I have two years of experience on the CheckUP Board to date and I continue to be inspired as I engage with my Board colleagues, the Executive and the broader CheckUP team. Collectively, we are working hard to grow the profile of the organisation and make significant contributions towards creating healthier communities.

Jennifer Pouwer
CheckUP Board Director



It has been pleasing to see CheckUP mature as an organisation over the past three years since I became a Director. CheckUP's growing impact and ability to coordinate the delivery of health services in a complex landscape is a testament to the resilience and sophistication of the CheckUP team. We should all be proud of the work being done to ensure that health inequities are being addressed as a direct result of the relationships, health programs and healthier communities created through CheckUP.

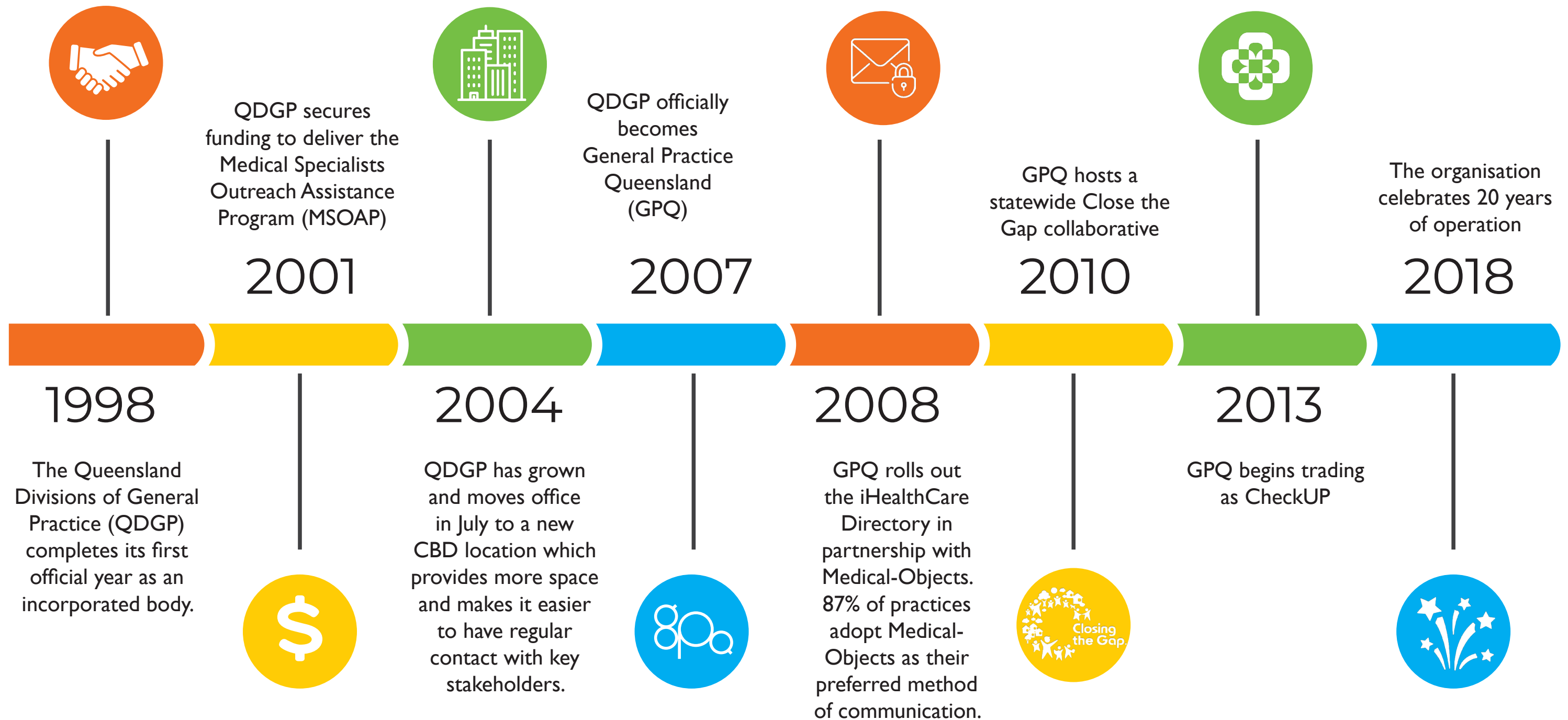
Chris McCarthy
CheckUP Board Director



I've been involved with CheckUP for eight years now, and have seen enormous transformation from the good work with the Divisions of General Practice right through to being an organisation focused on improving the health of communities, particularly in disadvantaged areas. CheckUP has much to offer going forward, not only in Queensland, but also in other parts of Australia. The Board and management have done a wonderful job in bringing our vision to fruition.

Assoc. Professor Michael Greco
CheckUP Board Director

Celebrating 20 Years



The Early Years - Queensland Divisions of General Practice (QDGP)

In 1998 the health system was fragmented with hospitals, GPs and primary health care services looking for ways to better work together. In this environment, the Queensland Divisions of General Practice (QDGP) was formed and completes its first official year as an incorporated body aimed at providing support and advocacy for Queensland's 20 Divisions of General Practice at state and national levels.

Highlights of this fledgling year include the development of a number of MOUs between Queensland Health Districts and their respective Divisions to support integrated primary healthcare models and the launch of programs to address chronic disease, mental health, immunisation, preventative health and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

By 2002 QDGP is in its fourth year of operation. Networks are growing, and programs are building stronger connections between Queensland Divisions and key players in the health sector.

Following initial GP and community consultations in Moranbah, Charters Towers, Mt Isa and the Tablelands, QDGP submits a costed plan for proposed specialist outreach services. This results in Commonwealth funding for services to 23 rural locations in specialties including ophthalmology, dermatology, cardiology and ENT to be delivered through the Medical Specialist Outreach Assistance Program (MSOAP).

In 2004 QDGP has grown and moves office to a new CBD location which provides more space and makes it easier to have regular contact with key stakeholders.

MSOAP is well underway, delivered in collaboration with the four rural Divisions of General Practice. The program increases specialist services to disadvantaged communities throughout Queensland and clocks up more than 4000 patient consultations.

Other successful MSOAP initiatives include Tele-Derm, a collaboration between QDGP and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine, which provides GPs with free Internet access to a dermatologist.

Policy development and influencing Government policy has been a major focus for QDGP, yielding results such as the development of a Queensland Divisions Network Position Statement regarding the role of General Practice within the primary healthcare system. With health reform around the corner there are significant opportunities to forge new and meaningful partnerships with Queensland Health and deliver the best health services to Queenslanders.

Partnerships and collaboration continue to be a focus for QDGP in 2006, and in February that year QDGP and Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC) hold a joint Board meeting to identify priority areas for collaboration.





General Practice Queensland

On 1 July 2007 Queensland Divisions of General Practice officially becomes General Practice Queensland (GPQ). The journey to a new company structure does not change the mission and values of the organisation and programs and collaborations continue to deliver results.

The beginning of the year marks the start of GPQ's involvement in the Connecting Health Care in Communities (CHIC) initiative. Through this initiative, twenty partnership councils are established to enhance service coordination through shared planning and agreed roles across traditional boundaries. The planning priorities address chronic and complex care, integrated health promotion and illness prevention, early childhood health, community mental health and drug and alcohol services. Towards the end of the year GPQ and Griffith University establish a partnership to form a Collaborative Research Hub. The key focus is to increase the relevance and use of health service research to inform decision making – bridging the gap between research and practice.

Throughout 2008, GPQ continues to provide ongoing leadership and support for members as Health Reform generates excitement about new opportunities as well as uncertainty with the outcome of change. At a national level, key events included the election of a new Government, the formation of the National Health and Hospitals Reform Commission, the Prevention Taskforce, the Primary Health Care Strategy, the Australian 2020 summit, the regeneration of Health Care Agreements, the CoAG Health and Ageing Working Group, the GP Super Clinics Initiative and numerous policy papers from policy institutes and academic bodies.

Focus areas for GPQ programs and initiatives at this time include eHealth solutions, improving access to outpatient services, aged care access and immunisation.

GPQ, together with the Divisions, continues to focus on increasing access to appropriate, affordable and timely primary healthcare that is equitably distributed across Queensland. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health remains a key focus and GPQ provides high level liaison and planning in relation to the COAG Closing the Gap initiative. Efforts to improve the physical health of people with a severe mental illness also receives a boost as the Activate Mind and Body project, a joint initiative between GPQ and Queensland Health, receives funding to develop resources for primary healthcare.

In late 2009, GPQ hosts a series of Primary Health Care Roundtables designed to connect organisations and share information relating to the national health reform agenda. It was through coming together regularly that organisations recognised the importance of partnership and the discussions that were taking place. As a result, participants agreed to formalise the Queensland Primary Health Care Network (QPHCN) which is still held quarterly by CheckUP.

During 2010, GPQ continues to provide statewide support for Closing the Gap initiatives. The formation of a statewide Closing the Gap Steering Committee to guide implementation of all GPQ Closing the Gap Programs is a key activity.

In July 2010, a Closing the Gap collaborative, which started as a partnership between QAIHC and GPQ, brings together 21 Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services with medical clinics, 13 Aboriginal Medical Services and 17 general practices from seven divisions in areas with high Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander populations. The partnership results in linkages between Closing the Gap programs across Queensland and the sharing of valuable resources.

The beginning of 2011 saw major flooding throughout much of South East Queensland and the devastation of Severe Tropical Cyclone Yasi to the state's North. GPQ provided a rapid response to these natural disasters with the creation of an action plan to support affected Divisions and general practices. GPQ also provides representation on the statewide Human and Social Recovery Subcommittee and coordinates the delivery of Skills for Psychological Recovery training for primary health care providers in flood and cyclone damaged communities.

In May 2011, GPQ and QAIHC signs a collaborative agreement. Both organisations stated their intention to work together in a systematic and sustained way to overcome the significant logistical, environmental and lifestyle factors that perpetuate the health divide between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander persons and other Australians.

In November, GPQ hosts an Outreach Services Gala Dinner to celebrate more than a decade of increasing access to medical and specialist services in rural and



remote Queensland through the Medical Specialist Outreach Assistance Program (MSOAP).

2012 was a watershed year as GPQ ends its role as the state-based peak body for Divisions of General Practice and starts its transition to an independent, industry body dedicated to advancing primary healthcare.

Health reform brings change with eleven Medicare Locals to be established in Queensland by June, all evolving from the Divisions of General Practice. GPQ plays an important role supporting the evolution of Medicare Locals and ensuring the smooth transition of Commonwealth-funded programs.

As GPQ supports the Divisions through significant change it also must focus on its own transformation. This includes constitutional change as well as a new business model, revised strategic direction and new branding. Changes to the constitution enable the new Medicare Locals and other organisations with a primary health focus to become members. In October 2012, the new CheckUP corporate branding was unveiled along with the launch of a Foundation Membership campaign. It brings an enthusiastic response with 45 like-minded organisations becoming members.

By the end of the year the transition to CheckUP is well underway with Commonwealth funded programs and responsibilities smoothly transferred to the eleven newly established Medicare Locals.

Today and to the future CheckUP Australia



On 1 January 2013, General Practice Queensland starts trading as CheckUP. This is a significant milestone for the organisation, which starts the year with a new Board of Directors, 45 Foundation Members and a clear vision for the future.

CheckUP continues to connect the healthcare sector through a range of networks including Queensland Primary Health Care Network (QPHCN), the Queensland General Practice Liaison Officer (GPLO) Network and the Queensland GP Alliance.

In May 2013, CheckUP in partnership with the QAIHC, is announced as the jurisdictional fund holder of the newly established Rural Health Outreach Fund and the Medical Outreach Chronic Disease Program. These two new funds represented a significant opportunity to drive an integrated approach to the delivery of outreach medical specialist, GP and specialised allied health professional services to those living in urban, regional, rural and remote locations, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

In February 2014 CheckUP moves office to co-locate with QAIHC and we are also awarded the Healthy Ears - Better Hearing, Better Listening program. The new location consolidates a partnership approach and joint commitment to improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health. Both organisations are determined to work together in a sustained way to overcome the significant health divide between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and other Australians.

A new regional structure is established to ensure equitable access to services under the Outreach program. The structure is supported by Regional Coordinators who are on the ground to facilitate planning and delivery of services across six regions in Queensland in alignment with local community needs.

Throughout the year, CheckUP continues to be an important “connector” for primary health, bringing together many different stakeholders through a wide range of high quality events. This includes the highly successful Health Leaders Forum in September where 110 delegates from 64 organisations come together to discuss new ways of working collaboratively. New

information to inform healthcare planning and service delivery is sought as CheckUP’s annual survey is given a new name, Health in Focus, and invites the general public to have their say about the issues that matter most to them in relation to healthcare in Queensland.

Mental health skills training has been very popular with workshops run in South Brisbane, Cairns, Emerald and Rockhampton receiving excellent feedback. The organisation’s knowledge and commitment in supporting mental health improvement is further acknowledged as the Queensland Mental Health Commission engages CheckUP to lead a service and integration mapping project to inform the Queensland Mental Health, Drug and Alcohol Strategic Plan 2104-2019. Information discovered through the project informs the *Shared Commitments to Action* document.

Outreach services continue to strengthen with new models of care and improved coordination increasing much needed services for remote and very remote communities. The Commonwealth Department of Health funds additional ENT surgery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children who would otherwise be on a two to three-year waiting list. The surgeries, coordinated by North Coast Aboriginal Corporation for Community Health (NCACCH) take place at Noosa Hospital improving hearing and speech for 21 children, aged between three and 19 years.

New partnerships give birth to new programs. December 2015 marks the establishment of a partnership between the Department of Education and Training, LTTS and CheckUP to support the *Allied Health in Remote Schools* initiative. This initiative integrates education and health methods to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students with developmental needs.

CheckUP also continues to connect primary health care organisations. The 2015 Health Leaders Forum to attract a record number of attendees with the theme *Primary health care: Working together to make it happen*. The inaugural Outreach Symposium is held in November 2015 attended by 110 delegates from across the state. The symposium showcases best practice models of healthcare for delivering vital services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and people living in rural and remote areas of Queensland. The first edition of IMPACT, CheckUP’s new magazine, is launched at the symposium.

By 2016, CheckUP’s Outreach Programs are delivering much needed services for those who need it most with additional funding, partnerships and collaboration boosting services. CheckUP is awarded the Visiting Optometrist Scheme and Indigenous Eye Health

contracts under the MOICDP program.

Over the course of the year 110 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people from the South West, Lower Gulf and Mount Isa regions have sight saving cataract surgery. In addition, 31 young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders from the Cape and Sunshine Coast regions receive ENT surgery. CheckUP collaborates with a range of organisations and stakeholders to ensure the success of these surgeries.

CheckUP’s signature event, the CheckUP Forum, in September 2016 attracted almost 200 delegates from 89 different health and community organisations. Facilitated by Dr Norman Swan, the theme was *#health2020: change is on the horizon* and presentations explored emerging trends and technologies in healthcare.

CheckUP continued to grow throughout 2017 and 2018 with the Commonwealth Department of Health providing funding to CheckUP to lead the trial of the Centre for Rural and Regional Indigenous Health’s (CRRIH - formerly CQRAICCHO) Tucka-Time Program in six rural and remote schools across Queensland. CheckUP also secures the Queensland Department of Education and Training Be Well Learn Well contract in partnership with Gidgee Healing and Apunipima Cape York Health Council.

The CheckUP Forum continues to attract large numbers and the annual Networking Dinner is popular. Our mental health training programs are redeveloped and a series of videos that showcase the impact of our work are released.

After 20 years we are more determined than ever before to ensure that every person, no matter who they are or where they live, has access to high quality healthcare.

Thank you for your ongoing support as we look forward to continuing to make a difference over the next 20!





Tucka-Time

It's all smiles as students learn how to cook healthy meals and use the act of preparing food to connect with others.

One year into the roll-out of Tucka-Time, a nutrition program developed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students by CRRIH, six schools have now been engaged in the program. Located in rural, regional and remote parts of Queensland, Tucka-Time has already been delivered into Vincent State School (Townsville), Cunnamulla State School and Tagai College's Thursday Island Primary Campus. Heatley State School (Townsville), Bwgcolman College (Palm Island) and Djarragun College (Gordonvale) will also commence their first round of the program this year.

Funded by the Commonwealth Department of Health, the program is being delivered into these six schools over a three year period, with a new cohort of up to 30 students per school participating each year. Aimed at improving knowledge and skills around nutrition and social and emotional wellbeing, the program includes practical activities such as cooking classes and a supermarket tour, as well as information sessions delivered by a dietitian and psychologist.

CheckUP is working in partnership with the CRRIH, who developed and piloted the program in Biloela

in 2016. CRRIH's Manager, Health Access and Planning, Melena McKeown trains local Aboriginal and Islander Health Workers in community to act as local facilitators while CheckUP's role is to coordinate visiting service providers and collate evaluation data for the program.

In addition to the life skills that are developed during Tucka-Time and the potential for longer term health benefits, the program also acts as a connection between schools, families and health professionals in their local community.

Feedback from participating schools to date has been overwhelmingly positive, with the principal of Vincent State School reporting that the program gave both students and the school a real boost, while the class teacher noted an improvement in class behaviour and attendance rates on the days Tucka-Time was held. Feedback from the students themselves, who were surveyed at the commencement and conclusion of the program, demonstrated an increased level of knowledge about healthy food choices and confidence in helping to prepare and cook at home with their families.

Perhaps the best feedback however has come from some of the parents whose children have completed the program. As one mum noted, "William absolutely loved Tucka-Time! He spoke about it all the time. He even made the quiche for his Grandmother's church group."





The Be Well Learn Well (BWLW) program is providing health services in remote schools to give kids with developmental needs the best chance to learn.

The BWLW program is an early intervention strategy that supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander student developmental needs in remote state schools through the delivery of targeted allied health therapy services. The objective of the BWLW program is to identify and address behavioural and learning issues to improve educational outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

“...he attends school regularly and actively participates in the classroom”

The integration of early intervention and health promoting methodologies in the school setting is central to the program, which brings together the education and

health workforce in remote Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

The health services are provided within the school setting with input from principals, teachers, guidance officers, heads of special education, the student’s family and the wider community in the process of improving the learning outcomes for the student.

BWLW adopts a holistic approach to therapy by involving the school, student, family and wider community to address the underlying causes and/or developmental needs that may be contributing to learning and behavioural issues at school.

Delivery of this model in the school-setting, as opposed to a clinical setting, is essential to this program and allows an integrated workforce of education and health professionals from local ACCHOs to respond in a holistic and timely manner to address the various risk factors influencing child development and schooling outcomes.

“...she now engages in classroom activities”

Eight schools are participating in the program:

- Aurukun State School
- Doomadgee State School
- Kowanyama State School
- Lockhart State School
- Mornington Island State School
- Northern Peninsula Area State College - Bamaga Campus
- Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy - Coen Campus
- Cape York Aboriginal Australian Academy - Hopevale Campus

“...his confidence has increased”

The BWLW program commenced in April 2017. In 2017, over 900 allied health therapy sessions were provided to approximately 400 students.

In the first half of 2018, over 700 allied health therapies were provided to approximately 250 students.

Funding from the Commonwealth Department of Health outreach programs, coordinated by CheckUP, is also used to support the delivery of the allied health services by reimbursing out of pocket travel expenses. This partnership approach will ensure that the BWLW program will be able to respond quickly and in a culturally appropriate way to address health and learning issues for children attending these schools.

“...improved engagement with friends”

CheckUP, in partnership with Gidgee Healing and Apunipima Cape York Health Council, is coordinating the delivery of the Be Well Learn Well (BWLW) program on behalf of the Department of Education and Training.

Psychology
Speech therapy
Clinical psychology
Occupational therapy



BWLW Coordinator, Elise Gorman



BWLW team in Kowanyama



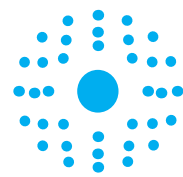
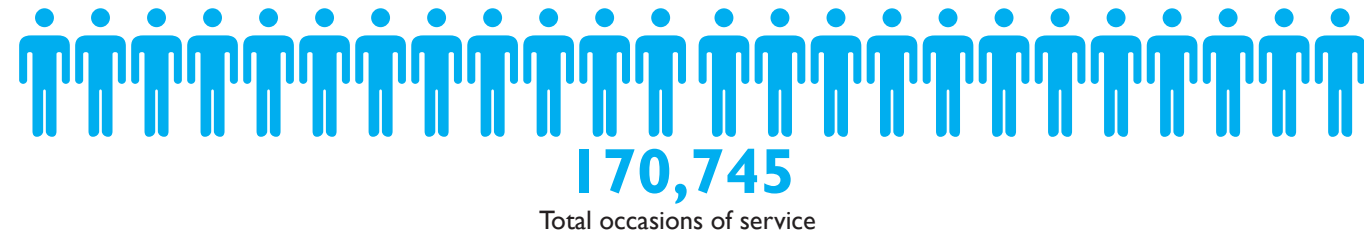
Apunipima and Gidgee Healing therapists



Aurukun from the air

Outreach Statistics (2017-2018)

CheckUP, in partnership with the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council (QAIHC), is the jurisdictional fund holder for the Rural Health Outreach Fund (RHOF), Medical Outreach Indigenous Chronic Disease Program (MOICDP), Healthy Ears – Better Hearing, Better Listening (HE-BH, BL), Visiting Optometry Scheme (VOS) and Eye and Ears Surgical Services (EESS) initiatives in Queensland.



Total occasions of service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients



Total health professions



Total number of services



Total locations visited



Total number of visits

Medical Outreach Indigenous Chronic Disease Program (MOICDP)

The aim of the MOICDP is to increase access to a range of health services, including expanded primary health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the treatment and management of chronic disease.



Total occasions of service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients



Total health professions



Total number of services



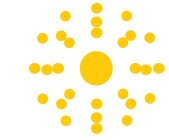
Total locations visited



Total number of visits

Rural Health Outreach Fund (RHOF)

The aim of the RHOF is to improve health outcomes for people living in regional, rural and remote locations by supporting the delivery of outreach health activities.



Total occasions of service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients



Total health professions



Total number of services



Total locations visited



Total number of visits

Healthy Ears – Better Hearing, Better Listening (HE-BHBL)

The aim of the Healthy Ears - Better Hearing, Better Listening Program is to increase access to a range of health services including expanded primary health for Indigenous children and youth (0-21 years) for the diagnosis, treatment and management of ear and hearing health.



Total occasions of service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients



Total health professions



Total number of services



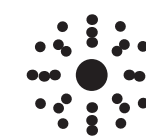
Total locations visited



Total number of visits

Visiting Optometrists Scheme (VOS)

The aim of the VOS is to deliver outreach optometry services to people living in regional, rural and remote locations, who do not have ready access to primary eye care services. This includes expanded services to improve eye health for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, particularly in rural and remote locations.



Total occasions of service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients



Total health professions



Total number of services



Total locations visited



Total number of visits



Life changing surgery for Yarrabah children

CheckUP staff, Jacqui Hawgood, David Millichap and Nelson Lee visited Cairns in early 2018 as part of CheckUP's Eye and Ear Surgical Support Services (EESSS) initiative that saw 16 children from Yarrabah have much needed ear surgery.

The CheckUP team worked in collaboration with Gurriny Yaelamucka Health Service Aboriginal Corporation and Northern Queensland PHN on this vital project which has provided life-changing surgery to some of Yarrabah's youngest residents.

The surgery was undertaken by Dr Suki with wonderful support from the team at Cairns Day Surgery.

Gurriny Yealamucka Health Service Aboriginal Corporation's CEO, Suzanne Andrews, said that the ENT surgery initiative was a significant collaboration benefiting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children. "We know that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are disproportionately affected by hearing issues and that prevention and treatment really has the power to change lives. We are very proud to be involved in the coordination of this program to help address the hearing health of these children."

Northern Queensland Primary Health Network (NQPHN) CEO John Gregg said, "improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health by closing the gap is a priority area of NQPHN. Working with Gurriny and CheckUP has assisted timely access to ENT services that may otherwise be out of reach for many of the children in need within the Yarrabah community. We are proud to be a part of this program, as we continuously work towards helping northern Queenslanders to live happier, healthier, and longer lives."

CheckUP CEO Ann Maree Liddy reiterated that the surgery will be a game changer

for the young recipients. "This round of ear surgery for these young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children from Yarrabah means they will be better able to listen, learn, and engage with their family, teachers and peers. 30 minutes of surgery is giving them the opportunity to have a more productive, healthier, happier future than they may have had otherwise. The collective vision for all the organisations involved, is that all Queensland children should have timely access to treatment of this kind."

"This is the fourth group surgery round CheckUP has coordinated in Cairns and we know from previous rounds, the impact on these children's lives is swift and remarkable. We are planning on more surgery rounds in the future, so we can assist more children who have been experiencing long-term hearing issues."

The funding for this surgery was generously provided to CheckUP by the Commonwealth Department of Health through the Eye and Ear Surgical Support Services program, and through the NQPHN.



Jacqui Hawgood from CheckUP with Dannielle Gillespie from Gurriny Yealamucka Health Service

Focus on eye health

Blindness rates in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are three times higher than other Australians yet 90 per cent of this vision loss is preventable or treatable.

Dr O'Hagan has been coordinating Indigenous eye health services with CheckUP for 18 months however he has been providing surgical care for the Indigenous patients in the far north for more than 15 years. He says partnerships with Aboriginal and Islander Community Controlled Health Services (AICCHS) are vital for closing the gap in eye health.

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living in regional and remote areas have to overcome physical as well as cultural barriers to access the eye health services they need. Partnerships with community-controlled health services help break down these barriers so more people can get the treatment and care they need to maintain healthy sight," Dr O'Hagan said.

He said AICCHS work with CheckUP to improve access to Indigenous eye health services in many ways including undertaking reviews of surgery referral lists to make sure no one is missed and providing targeted support services to increase appointment attendance.

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are less likely to attend appointments when they don't feel culturally safe. Having the right support in place can make all the difference," Dr O'Hagan emphasised.

It makes a difference when visiting health professionals such as optometrists provide outreach clinics in local communities and it makes a difference when patients need to come to hospital to receive eye surgery."

Dr O'Hagan explained how the support given to 12 patients who recently received cataract surgery at Cairns Base Hospital was a great example of what can be achieved through AICCHS partnerships.

Blinding cataract is 12 times more common in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians compared with other Australians, yet rates of cataract surgery are seven times lower.

Programs coordinated by CheckUP aim to improve access to cataract surgery for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians through partnerships that enable visiting specialists to perform more surgery from regional hospitals.

Dr O'Hagan said the success of surgery provided at Cairns Base Hospital would not have been possible without support from AICCHS.

"Patients travelled to Cairns from Mareeba, Atherton, Innisfail, Mount Garnet and Manooora to receive surgery and were supported by either Mamu Health Service or Mulungu Aboriginal Corporation Medical Centre."

Both Mamu and Mulungu reviewed the visiting specialist's waiting list to make sure it matched known referrals. They also supported individual patients through services such as appointment reminders and arranging a vehicle for those that needed transportation to the hospital. Preparing for surgery under the guidance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers meant patients had a better understanding about what to expect and were less worried.

"The result was a cost effective and culturally safe pathway through a public facility which enabled more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients to receive fast-tracked cataract surgery," Dr O'Hagan said.

CheckUP is the jurisdictional fund holder for the MOICDP, RHOF, VOS and EESSS initiatives in Queensland and employs a statewide Indigenous Eye Health Coordinator to work with key CheckUP staff and stakeholders to understand and address gaps in Indigenous eye healthcare across the state.

Young dietitian seeks 'tree-change'



CheckUP's North Queensland Regional Coordinator sat down with outreach dietitian Jessie Walter to have a chat about why she loves what she does!

Hi Jessie. Thank you for taking the time to meet with me. Can you give me a little bit of information about your background?

I was born in a small country town in NSW but grew up on the Gold Coast. I graduated from the University of New England, Armidale, with a Bachelor of Biomedical Science in 2015 and two years later I graduated from Griffith University with a Bachelor of Nutrition and Dietetics. I then moved to Atherton for a "tree-change" and to work as a private dietitian and have loved every minute of it.

What attracted you to outreach?

I enjoy outreach as it provides an opportunity for better health outcomes for those that live outside of major cities. Being born in a small country town and moving to a city I was able to see the difference in the availability of healthcare, so now I love being able to provide that healthcare to those that otherwise may not receive it.

Which locations do you visit?

I currently visit the Mamu clinic in Ravenshoe once a month

What sort of work do you most enjoy in general practice?

In general, I love any type of work where I can follow and be a part of a patient's journey and see positive health outcomes.

What is your key primary healthcare message to the communities?

If you have the health services available to you, take advantage of them while they are there.

Can you share a message with other health professionals?

If you have the opportunity, definitely get involved with working in outreach and provide your services to these communities – it can be very rewarding!

What inspires you? Can you share a story of a patient/team/ community who inspired you?

I am inspired by people who take the time to improve the lives of others. The Mamu team at Ravenshoe inspire me as they work tirelessly and think of new ways to bring in patients who require services. They inspire me because they truly care about the health of each individual.

Who did you last listen to when you drive?

The last music I listened to in the car was the Script.

You have a spare week to do anything you want. What would you do?

If I had a spare week I would definitely be out exploring new areas, tasting new foods and trying new activities.

What is your ideal solution/ resolution to Closing the Gap?

This is a tough question, but I think if we were able to get more consistent and regular health services out in rural and remote communities we would see a positive change in Closing the Gap.



Mamu and CheckUP working together for good health

Keeping good health can be a challenge for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live a long way from health services and must overcome cultural barriers to get the help they need.

Culturally appropriate allied health services are important for the prevention, detection and management of chronic disease and CheckUP recently visited Mamu Health Service in Innisfail for a firsthand view of the difference these services make.

Mamu CEO Colleen Purcell (pictured, top right) was on hand to explain how the allied health services contracted by CheckUP have enabled her organisation to provide more comprehensive care to the communities they service.

“Most people would normally have to go to Cairns without the visiting health services, so we are very fortunate to be working with CheckUP. It lets us offer a one-stop shop for our community, which supports our organisation to offer a more ideal service,” Colleen said.

Visiting allied health practitioners provide the CheckUP funded services in Innisfail, Babinda, Tully, Ravenshoe and Cardwell. Podiatrist, Debbie Lawry (pictured, right), said she finds this work very rewarding and had nothing but praise for the Mamu clinics.

“There is fantastic follow-up with health workers, nurses and doctors here at Mamu,” Debbie said.

Debbie described how she takes a holistic approach when treating her patients, taking time to help them understand their condition, how to best manage it and how to get to help whenever they need it.

“When I see people, it’s not just about their feet. It’s often a whole lifestyle change and it’s nice when we get those wins and feel like we really do make a difference. And we are helping to close the gap, which is what we are here for,” Debbie said.

Mamu Health Service Limited is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation owned and managed by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to provide culturally appropriate primary health care programs.



Nelson Lee (CheckUP) and Sherry Holzapfel (Mamu)

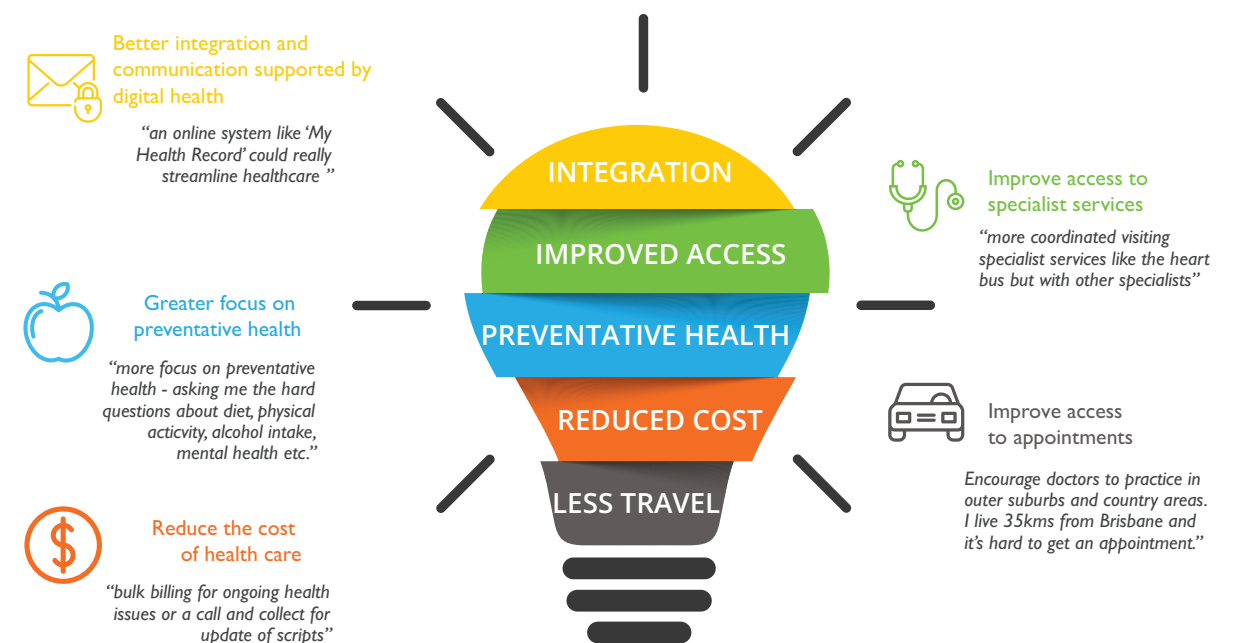


CheckUP's Health in Focus

The annual CheckUP survey, *Health in Focus*, aims to investigate issues faced by primary healthcare practitioners and the general public in Queensland focusing on a range of topics including workforce models, care coordination, the NDIS, preventative health, digital health and the interface between different sectors.

In 2017, the *Health in Focus* survey was held for the 9th time and received **1,328** responses comprised of **69%** from the general public with the remaining **31%** from health professionals.

The general public were asked to identify their **big idea** for a needed change that will improve health services to better meet health care needs. The most common themes were:



The complete 2017 Health in Focus report can be accessed at www.checkup.org.au/hif

CheckUP's ongoing commitment to reconciliation

CheckUP has a long and proud history of working closely with our colleagues from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector. CheckUP believes that reconciliation is a critical step in strengthening relationships, creating new opportunities and building respect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations.

Our Reconciliation journey has been made possible through close engagement and working alongside Aboriginal Community Controlled organisations and communities throughout Queensland. In addition, we have taken significant steps to create an organisational environment in which respect and cultural awareness are not just promoted, but embedded into our organisational DNA.

Our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan 2016-2018 built on our inaugural Reflect RAP and has confirmed our continued commitment to reconciliation. As we approach the end of our Innovate RAP, we have reflected on all that we have accomplished and all that remains to do. Our thoughts have now turned to the next phase of our reconciliation journey - a Stretch RAP, due for launch in 2019.

Our Stretch RAP will focus on implementing longer-term strategies, and working towards defined measurable targets and goals. The Stretch RAP will assist us to further embed reconciliation initiatives into our workplace to become 'business as usual' and to utilise our sphere of influence to drive reconciliation in our communities.

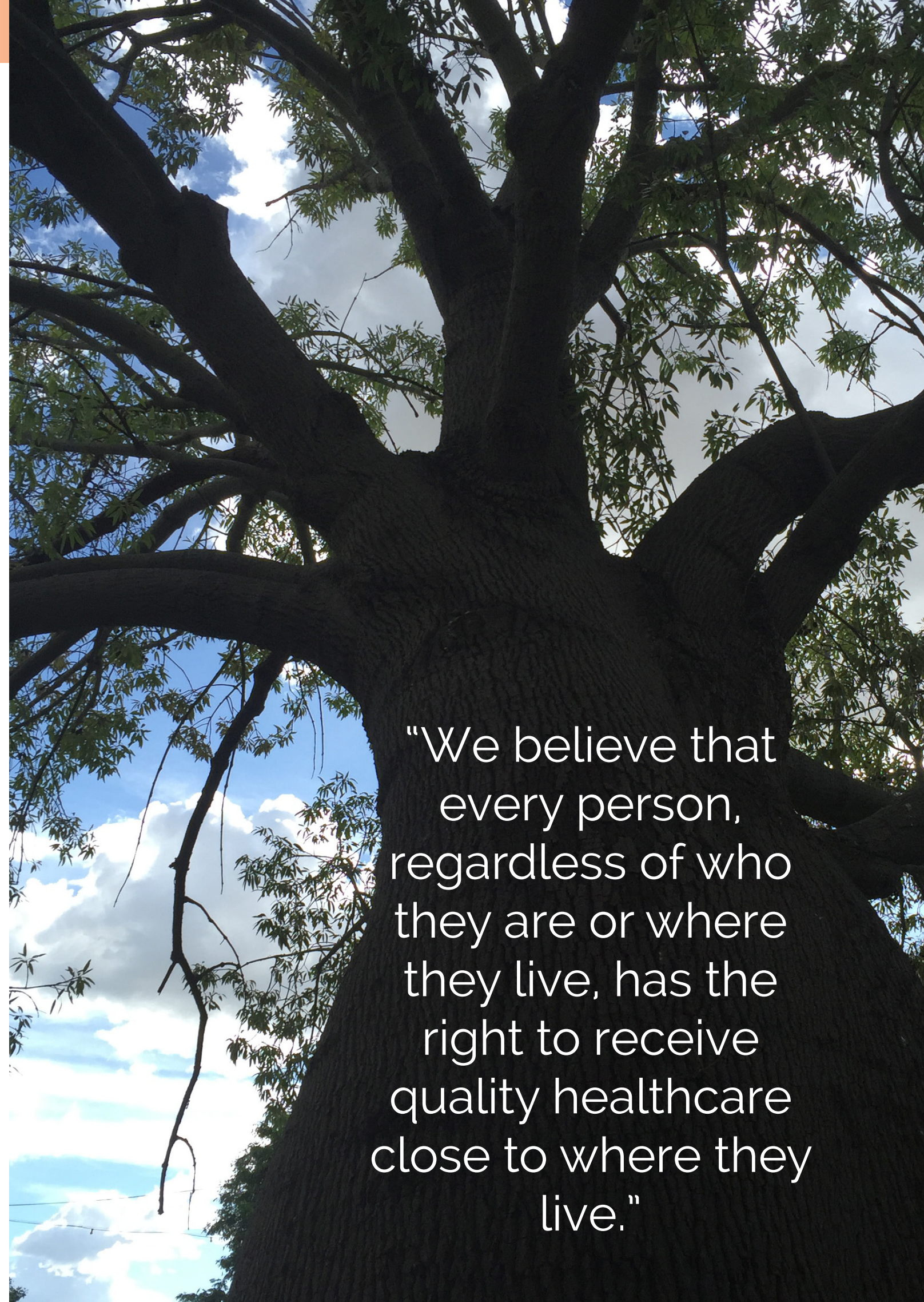
For more information visit - www.checkup.org.au/rap



Adrian Burragubba at the CheckUP Forum 2017



Aunty Carol Currie at the CheckUP Forum 2017



“We believe that every person, regardless of who they are or where they live, has the right to receive quality healthcare close to where they live.”



20 years of making a difference while having some fun!



Our Networks



QPHCN meeting attendees

QPHCN

The Queensland Primary Health Care Network continues to bring people together from a diverse range of organisations to share information about key initiatives and topical themes for those working in the primary care sector. As one presenter from Queensland Health recently commented, "This is a real treat for us. To be able to present information to such a wide range of organisations in the one place is something that we really value". Therein lies one of the QPHCN's and CheckUP's main strengths - bringing people together to share their insights and nurturing new partnerships.



Ann Maree Liddy and Michael Zanco launch the 2017-2018 GPLO Annual Report

GPLO

CheckUP continues to play an important role in coordinating the General Practice Liaison Officer (GPLO) Network in Queensland, in partnership with the team from Queensland Health's Healthcare Improvement Unit. CheckUP has always been an advocate for the GPLO role and our formal association with the GPLO Network now exceeds 10 years. Our current three-year contract with the Healthcare Improvement Unit has seen the organisation of 10 GPLO Network Forums, the production of two Annual Reports, and the maintenance of an email discussion group.

Our Partnerships

A key success factor for CheckUP over the past 20 years has been the development of strong and lasting partnerships with a large number of organisations. CheckUP strongly believes in the value of collaboration and partnerships and we incorporate this philosophy into all of the work that we undertake.



Ann Maree Liddy, Colin Duff, Dr Sheilagh Cronin and Stuart Gordon at the signing of the CheckUP and Western Queensland PHN MOU

One of CheckUP's most enduring partnerships is with the QAIHC. Our two organisations have a long standing shared vision for improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and our five-year office co-location is another indicator of our strong desire to work closely together to make a difference.

In 2018, we signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Western Queensland PHN which further strengthened our partnership. Both organisations are committed to ensuring that health services are delivered in a culturally appropriate way and are responding to local needs.

CheckUP also became a member of Northern Queensland PHN in 2018, one of only four member organisations of the PHN. Being a member of the NQ Primary Health Network allows us to work in close collaboration with the PHN and other health care providers within the region so that together, we can provide healthcare services closer to home for communities in North Queensland.



Aunty Mary Martin and Ann Maree Liddy Neil Willmetts, Ann Maree Liddy, Justin Saunders and Aunty Mary Martin



Thank you to our 2017 - 2018 Members

Our Foundation Members



Our Members



Valuing Mental Health

Good mental health is important for everyone and Queensland Mental Health Week is a time to reflect on what this means at home, at work, and at play.

It is also a time to highlight the importance of breaking down the stigma associated with mental illness and encouraging people in our communities who need help to reach out and connect.

In 2018, CheckUP in partnership with Mental Illness Fellowship (MIFQ), is proud to be coordinating Queensland Mental Health Week for the Queensland Mental Health Commission. The week is delivered with committed partner organisations who work together to engage people and communities across Queensland.

The theme for this year is to *value mental health* with six simple steps that have been proven to improve wellbeing in everyday life:

1. Be active – do what you can, enjoy what you do, get moving and improve your mood
2. Keep learning – embrace new experiences, recognise opportunities, surprise yourself
3. Connect – talk, listen, be there
4. Give – your time, your words, your presence
5. Take notice – remember the simple things that give you joy
6. Care for our planet – it's the home we all share

Informed by the Wheel of Wellbeing* the six steps help all people build skills and raise awareness about what can be done to improve mental health and wellbeing.

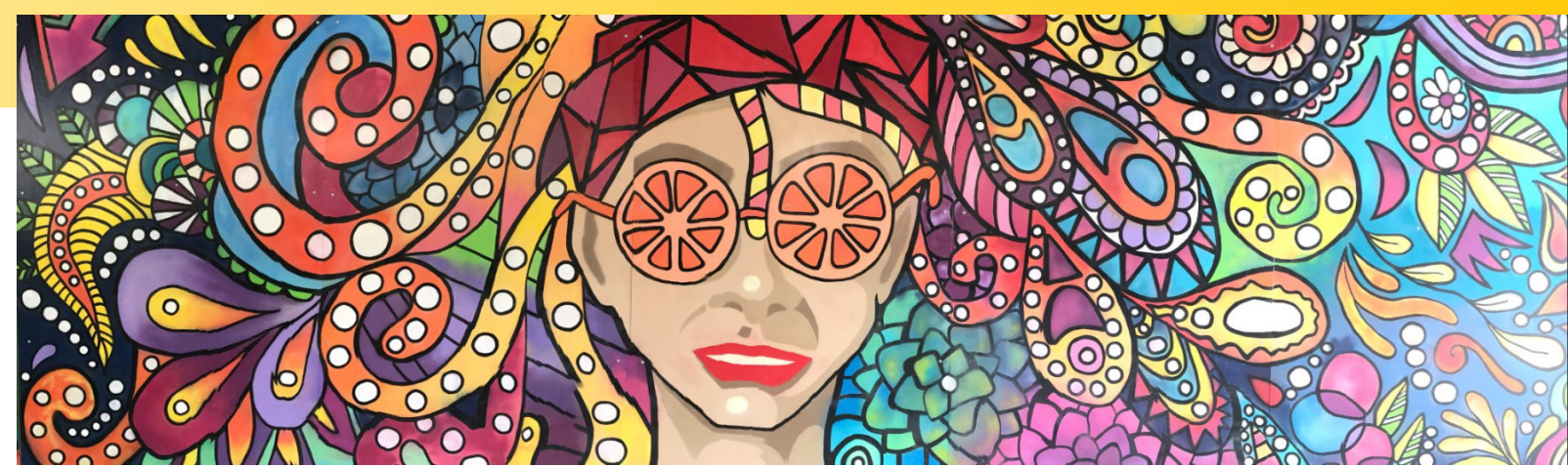
Queensland Mental Health Week takes place between Saturday 6 – Sunday 14 October 2018. While centrally themed and coordinated, Queensland Mental Health Week encompasses hundreds of events organised by many individuals, community groups and service providers throughout the state.

More information can be found at www.qldmentalhealthweek.org.au

*The Wheel of Wellbeing was developed by South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust.

Mental Health Skills Training

Our two mental health training programs for GPs were redeveloped in 2017 with funding from the Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN. In 2018 four Level One Mental Health Skills Training courses have been held in Brisbane, Ipswich and Toowoomba. Further courses are planned for the second half of 2018.



6-14 October 2018



#qmhw #valuementalhealth

www.qldmentalhealthweek.org.au

Queensland Mental Health Week (QMHW) is an annual event that aims to improve community awareness and interest in mental health and wellbeing across the state.

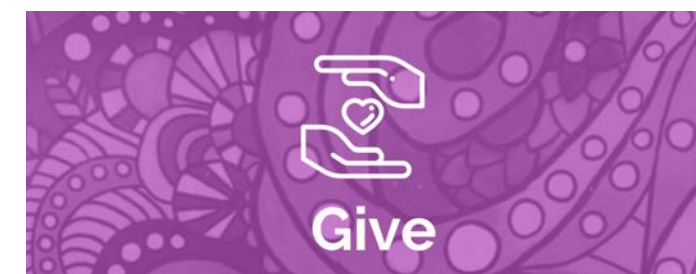
The theme for 2018 is to *value mental health* with six steps:



Physical activities like walking can positively influence the way you think, feel and function.



Our wellbeing can improve by taking up a new hobby or practising the piano.



Practising random acts of kindness or volunteering time can work wonders for your wellbeing.



Close relationships with friends and family can add up to seven years to our lives.



Savouring our surroundings gives us, quite literally, more breathing space.



Keeping our blue planet in tip-top shape is the best recipe for world wellbeing.



To get involved go to:
www.qldmentalhealthweek.org.au

QMHW is funded by



The 10 Year Club



Ann Maree Liddy
20 years service

Ten years plus – what a journey! Our achievements would not have been possible without the incredible teams of committed staff who have consistently made QDGP-GPQ-CheckUP such a great place to work. Whilst the size and the composition of our staff has evolved over time – every person who has worked for CheckUP has played their part in contributing to our success. It has been inspiring to work alongside so many of our staff teams and to be part of their personal and professional journey.



Del Chapman
14 years service

When I joined QDGP I discovered a team of hard-working and caring people who believed in the organisation's purpose. Nearly fifteen years later, with a rebrand to GPQ along the way, I am now fortunate to be part of the organisation with its newest identity of CheckUP. The early years of CheckUP have passed, and new opportunities are continuing to present themselves. It is a pleasure to be associated with the wonderful people who have ensured the ongoing presence of this worthy organisation. As I approach retirement, I feel a little sad to think I shall not be able to be on staff for another 15 years, as I'm certain there are many more exciting opportunities ahead for CheckUP!



David Phillips
13 years service

Starting in August 2001 I was employed as QDGP's Financial Manager. I was fortunate to be part of the transition from QDGP to GPQ and then to CheckUP. Over the years I saw many changes but the one constant that remained was the hard working and dedicated team at each iteration of the organisation. They have been the driving force behind the success of the organisation. I feel privileged to have been part of the team.



Libby Dunstan
13 years service

When I reflect on my time at CheckUP, and it's previous iterations - GPQ and QDGP - I'm struck by the amazing journey this organisation has been on, how far it has come and how lucky I have been to be a small part of that. My time at the organisation was a wonderful journey working alongside a fantastic team of people doing great things. CheckUP has always been a leader in its field and I'm thankful for the time I spent as one of the team.



Sabrina Kerr
12 years service

I have been part of the QDGP, GPQ and CheckUP family for a little over 12 years. I have seen many changes during my time here, including the organisation transitioning not once but twice. I have experienced many of my own personal highs while working at CheckUP and the family here have supported me through it all. I love knowing the work that CheckUP undertakes contributes to improving the lives of communities in Queensland.



Karen Hale-Robertson
11 years service

Some may know that I've actually had two 'stints' at QDGP/GPQ and then CheckUP. I started with QDGP back in year 2000 as a Mental Health Program Officer and had the great privilege of working under the late Dr Grace Groom, who became a great friend and mentor to me. I realise now just how important that first four years with QDGP was for my career and how well it prepared me to work in London in the NFP sector. Upon returning four years later, GPQ was quite a different organisation but still just as busy and vibrant. My favourite years, however have been with CheckUP. I've had the privilege of working with great people at the Board, Executive and staff level, many of whom I call friends. I have learnt so much and love that there's plenty more still to learn. We've diversified and then honed our vision and today, by working with many others, we're making significant contributions to healthier communities right across Queensland.



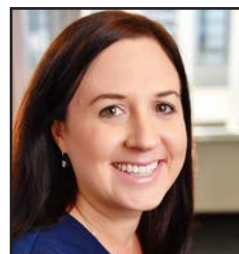
David Millichap
11 years service

I feel honoured to be one of just a handful of people who have worked at QDGP, GPQ and CheckUP. This places me in a unique position as I have witnessed the evolution of the organisation first hand and I couldn't be more proud of how we have transitioned to a vibrant, professional, caring organisation that is striving to help more people in more ways each year. Another real bonus of working at a place for this long is the chance to meet and work with so many amazing people – particularly fellow staff, members and stakeholders.



Kat Murray
10 years service

Eleven years ago was my first interaction with CheckUP (then GPQ) as a Program Officer in the Biloela office of CQRDGP. After moving back to Brisbane in early 2008 I was fortunate enough to secure a position at GPQ. Since then I have been part of the eHealth and then Engagement teams working alongside David Millichap. I have seen the organisation grow with many people coming and going over the years. I have worked with some truly amazing people all of whom I call friends. I am proud to say I work for an organisation that genuinely cares about making a difference to people's lives throughout this great state we live in!



Elise Gorman
10 years service

I joined the GPQ team just over 10 years ago. Fresh from University, GPQ/CheckUP has and continues to provide me with opportunities to apply and expand my knowledge and skills.

Over the 10 years, I have had the opportunity to meet and work with some great people. The CheckUP team, in particular, are dedicated and hardworking and have always provided great entertainment and laughs.

CheckUP is an organisation that genuinely cares about what they do and I feel privileged to have contributed to its many successes over the years.

Thank you all for your dedication!



We provide elegant data solutions for the healthcare industry

Aginic is a business intelligence (BI) and analytics consultancy, specialising in clinical, operational and financial solutions in healthcare. We are responsible for a number of analytics solutions across state health departments and public hospitals, as well as supporting primary health care and a number of private health organisations working to optimise and improve their data management, reporting and analytics.



Give us a call today on 07 3555 7555 or visit aginic.com

CheckUP
Level 2/36 Russell Street
SOUTH BRISBANE Q 4101
07 3105 8300
info@checkup.org.au

www.checkup.org.au



@checkupaustralia



@checkup_australia



@checkup_Aust

The Outreach programs are made possible through funding from the Australian Government Department of Health

