

25
YEARS

of Creating Healthier Communities Together

2023 – 2024 | ISSUE 10

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IMPACT

MAGAZINE



CHECKUP

Acknowledgement of country and commitment to diversity

CheckUP staff and board respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognise their continuing connection to the land, water and community. We pay respect to Elders past and present, and future leaders. CheckUP strongly supports equality for all. We embrace diversity and condemn any kind of discrimination, be it on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.



Image by Jan Roma, winner of CheckUP's Annual Photo Competition "People's Choice" category.



PUBLICATION DETAILS

CheckUP is a public company that is limited by guarantee.

CheckUP is registered with the Australian Charities Not-for-profits Commission.

IMPACT was prepared by CheckUP's Engagement team and contributed to by various staff members.

Please note that this document may contain images of deceased persons.

IMAGE DETAILS

Front cover: Lieu-Chi Nguyen – "Natural Environment" category winner of CheckUP's 2023 Photo Competition.

This page: Jan Roma – "People's Choice" category winner of CheckUP's 2023 Photo Competition.

Back cover: Jordyn Garner – "Human Interest" category winner of CheckUP's 2023 Photo Competition.

There are more photo competition images throughout the magazine.

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Welcome to the milestone tenth edition of IMPACT, a celebration that coincides with CheckUP's 25th anniversary! Over the past 25 years, CheckUP has been dedicated to creating better health for people and communities who need it most. This special edition includes many impactful stories, a testament to the collaborative efforts of CheckUP, our partners, providers, and members. Together we have supported health and well-being across Queensland, and improved equitable access to healthcare.

Throughout our 25 years, delivery of the Outreach health service program has remained at the core of what we do. The Outreach model of care brings essential healthcare

services into rural, remote, and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Providing Outreach health services can be complex, and it requires a collective effort. By working together, we not only make the model more effective, but more sustainable. With 75% of our dedicated service providers delivering their services for five or more years, we've established a foundation for long-term care in communities, ensuring continuity for people in regional, rural and remote areas.

Over time, our programs and initiatives have grown and expanded. Beyond health services, we continue to work to support Queensland's health workforce through the Health Gateway to Industry Schools project and our health workforce advisory roles. In addition, we aim to increase disability awareness for health professionals through our Access for All training and raise awareness for mental wellbeing during Queensland Mental Health Week.

While our programs have diversified over the years, the work that is highlighted in this publication has one common thread that binds

them – the power of collaboration. The stories shared in this edition showcase the outcomes and impact of our collective work and the dedicated individuals and organisations involved.

As we celebrate 25 years, we express our deepest gratitude to everyone who has been a part of our journey. I hope you enjoy in this edition of IMPACT.

Ann Maree Liddy
Chief Executive Officer



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 focused 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.

Milestones and memories

CheckUP celebrates 25 years

Since our foundation in 1998, our organisation has undergone several changes. Initially known as the Queensland Divisions of General Practice (QDGP), we officially became General Practice Queensland (GPQ) in 2004. In 2013, we underwent a rebrand which marked the introduction of the CheckUP logo and name, the identity by which we are recognised today.

“CheckUP’s remarkable journey is a testament to the support of our cherished partners, our devoted members, and the incredible Outreach health service providers who have stood with us every step of the way.”

– Colin Duff, Board Chair



“For 25 years CheckUP has been taking critical health care services to some of the most remote and disadvantaged communities in Queensland. During that time, CheckUP has built trusting relationships in communities and continues to ensure better health outcomes, with services provided close to home. I’m proud to be part of an organisation doing such worthy and valuable work.”

– Merrilyn Strohfeldt, Board Director.



Bringing women's health services to Palm Island

CheckUP has been able to provide Outreach funding to support specialised women's health services in the Palm Island Community. Thanks to CheckUP's new Outreach provider, Women's Health Circle, patients from Palm Island now have local access to specialised health services without the need for additional travel.

Women's Health Circle is a dedicated obstetrics, gynecology, and ultrasound service that caters to women in every stage of life. Their comprehensive range of services includes cervical screening, general gynecology, early pregnancy support, pregnancy-related ultrasounds, contraception options, and management of complex gynecological issues.

Women's Health Circle is committed to delivering specialised and equitable medical services to women in rural and regional areas, and they have now expanded their ability to do so through CheckUP's Outreach program. Dr Cecelia O'Brien, an experienced obstetrician and gynecologist from Women's Health Clinic, shared her thoughts on the Palm Island services, stating, "The Outreach program aims to provide equity to the services that are easily accessible to women living in metropolitan areas. Keeping women and their families together during pregnancy is paramount. It is so important that routine

antenatal care and routine diagnostic imaging like an early pregnancy scan to determine dating can be performed locally." Previously, patients from Palm Island had to make frequent trips to Townsville for specialist gynecology services and maternity scans, which often required a day trip to attend appointments. However, with the introduction of local services provided by Women's Health Circle, travel time for patients has been significantly reduced, and access to essential care has become much easier. It is common for women from Palm Island to relocate to Townsville for childbirth, and establishing a rapport between mothers and the obstetric team before the transfer is crucial. Healthcare providers forming a relationship with patients at the Outreach clinic prior to their relocation for childbirth significantly contributes to enhancing overall birth outcomes.

Dr O'Brien expressed the importance of meeting the women and their families to build this relationship during her visits to Palm Island commenting, "I love meeting the women and their families when I visit Palm Island. Women often bring their whole family in for the visits, whereas, when women travel to Townsville, they often can't bring their children or partners.



ABOVE: Dr Cecilia O'Brien (left) at the Palm Island clinic.

The continuity of care between Palm Island and Townsville Hospital is so important and needed as it makes for a better experience and improved outcomes for both mothers and babies."

Building on the successful delivery of the new service, CheckUP has been able to provide additional funding to Women's Health Circle to extend their health services to more communities. In the 2023-24 financial year, the Outreach clinics have been extended to the locations of Burketown, Doomadgee, Mornington Island, and Normanton. This expansion aims to provide more communities with access to these health services, ultimately leading to improved outcomes for families.



LEFT: The Women's Health Circle team pictured during an Outreach visit to Mornington Island.

Initiatives to target Queensland skin cancer rates

Queensland has the highest rate of both melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers in the world. Aiming to improve sun safety to prevent and reduce the impact of skin cancer, the Queensland Government's Skin cancer prevention and early detection project is split into three core drivers of change: social marketing, local health promotion activities and Outreach skin cancer detection services.

Coordinated by CheckUP the Skin Cancer Early Detection (SCED) Outreach Service has a focus on underserved regional towns, aiming to create fairer access to the professional assessment and treatment of skin cancer for people who have a skin cancer risk. Following extensive mapping and consultation with key stakeholders, the SCED Outreach services have been funded for five priority Hospital and Health Service regions that include Central Queensland, North West, South West, Mackay and Townsville.

CheckUP joins the Royal Flying Doctor Service on SCED Outreach visit

David Millichap, CheckUP's General Manager – Engagement and Business Development, travelled to Eulo with the team from the Royal Flying Doctor Service, observing first hand the impact of the newly established skin cancer

clinic, an integral component of CheckUP's SCED program. Located in the heart of Western Queensland, Eulo is little more than a pub and a general store. An outback oasis set on the banks of the Paroo river, Eulo is home to just over 90 residents.

CheckUP engages the Royal Flying Doctor Service (RFDS) to assist in the delivery of the SCED Outreach service. The RFDS team travel to the five priority locations

across Queensland, operating skin cancer clinics for those that would otherwise have to travel hundreds of kilometres for specialist skin cancer assessment and treatment, improving the health equity of regional, rural and remote Queenslanders.

David spoke with several patients in Eulo who expressed sincere gratitude for the visiting clinic, which saved them a long trip to Toowoomba or Brisbane to have their skin checked by a specially trained GP.



David Millichap, CheckUP's General Manager – Engagement and Business Development, travelled to Eulo with the team from the Royal Flying Doctor Service to observe the new skin cancer clinic.

Torres Strait and Cape York communities receive ENT care on country

Over 26,000 people reside in the Torres Strait and Cape York area. Only accessible via water or air for 40% of the year, the area is made up of over 30 remote and isolated communities.

The Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service (TCHHS) Ear, Nose and Throat (ENT) program was created to address accessibility challenges. It aims to reduce healthcare inequalities for Torres and Cape residents. Not only providing specialist care, the TCHHS ENT program also clinically supports understaffed and under-resourced primary healthcare clinics. The program provides communities with the following benefits:

- Early diagnosis and management
- Direct referrals to surgical intervention
- Rehabilitation services
- Knowledge and translation through clinic staff and health worker education
- Community engagement
- Primary prevention and health education
- Building capacity whilst addressing needs

A specialist otorhinolaryngologist, a rural generalist with advanced skills training, an ENT nurse practitioner, an audiologist, an Aboriginal Health Worker and a speech pathologist make up the program's small team. Small but passionate, the team understand the resounding effects that being unable to hear

or communicate properly can have on a person's everyday life, impacting their ability to access education and sustain employment.

Optimising the delivery of culturally appropriate care has been a core part of the program since its development. Having a dedicated Aboriginal Health Worker on the team has ensured community engagement and consultation.

The involvement of a rural GP with a special interest in ENT, living locally in the Torres Cape area, has provided a plethora of local knowledge. Living in the community, the GP knows the families and their unique histories, deepening the level of community engagement and patient rapport, further ensuring the delivery of culturally appropriate care.

The team are committed to partnering with local healthcare staff, not only providing additional upskilling and clinical support but building relationships based on camaraderie and friendship.

These relationships and the delivery of in-house allied health has facilitated stronger stakeholder relationships including those involved in early childhood development and rehabilitation, and Education Queensland.

Through strong community collaboration the TCHHS ENT program in 2022/2023 achieved:

445

Referrals received

1300+

Occasions of Service provided

32

Communities served

54

Surgical procedures performed locally

94%

of care kept local and provided on country

ABOVE: Photo taken by Philippa Hawke, CheckUP's Evaluation Lead, on a trip to Weipa to collect patient survey responses.

Program evaluation through CheckUP's PREM project

Through one-off Commonwealth Department of Health Indigenous Australians' Health Programme (IAHP) funding, the CheckUP team developed a tool to measure the cultural safety of service models used by the TCHHS ENT surgical program. CheckUP's Patient Reported Experience Measure (PREM) tool was designed in collaboration with Indigenous patients and health staff to understand patients' and their families' feelings of cultural safety when accessing surgical care. The CheckUP evaluation team travelled to Cooktown and Weipa to yarn with TCHHS ENT patients, parents, and carers, using the PREM tool to guide questions about the cultural safety of the TCHHS ENT surgical pathway. CheckUP also trained the ENT team's Aboriginal Health Worker to administer the PREM to support sustainable quality improvement activities.



The TCHHS ENT program received highly positive patient service satisfaction feedback, with results indicating that:

89% of patients surveyed felt very safe with staff

89% of patients surveyed felt very respected by staff

89% of patients surveyed felt their emotional needs were completely looked after (e.g., having family or people they knew travel with them)

89% of patients surveyed said their treatment was properly explained so they completely understood what was happening

89% of patients surveyed always felt included in decision-making about their treatment

100% of patients surveyed felt completely comfortable telling the staff about their health information

100% of patients surveyed would be likely to recommend this surgery service to family or friends



TOP RIGHT AND MIDDLE: Photos taken during evaluation visit by CheckUP staff to Cooktown.

LEFT: CheckUP's My CheerUP packs received by young ear surgery patients.

Collaborating to rise above: delivering healthcare to flood affected communities

In February 2023, several areas in Queensland, including Burketown, Doomadgee, Mornington Island, Karumba, and Normanton, were severely affected by flooding. As a result, the delivery of healthcare services was impacted, as Outreach providers were unable to reach these locations through regular driving routes.



Members of the Clements Medical team getting ready to take flight.

Amidst this flooding emergency, Dr Michael Clements, a General Practitioner and one of CheckUP's long-term Outreach providers, was able to assist with the healthcare needs of the affected communities. Dr Clements owns a light aircraft, which presented an opportunity to overcome the transportation challenges caused by the ongoing floods. Working in collaboration with Dr Clements, the CheckUP team reallocated funding to cover the travel costs associated with using his small aircraft. This enabled Dr Clements and his small team of doctors to visit the locations affected by the flooding, providing

much-needed healthcare support to the affected communities.

Brianna Delacour, CheckUP's regional coordinator for North and North West Queensland, was able to facilitate communication and collaboration with the North West Hospital and Health Service. Together, they identified areas where additional support was required, including diabetes services, sexual health screening, and skin cancer services. Thanks to Dr Clements' ability to travel via aircraft, he was able to support local GPs in delivering these primary healthcare services to

the flood-affected areas. His efforts played a vital role in ensuring that the communities in need received essential medical assistance during this challenging time.

Dr Clements spoke of the importance of acting in response to community needs in disasters, changing plans and remaining flexible, ensuring workforce are where they are most needed. During the floods, as the team of doctors were travelling to support one local GP, they received a call midair that another community's GP was unable to make it in. After alerting the pilot, the plane diverted course, dropping one of the team members off to offer support, before taking off and continuing on with the remaining team to service the original destination.

“Patients are busy thinking about damage to their properties not necessarily their health. One of the challenges of working in these flood-affected areas is making medical decisions while being conscious of the fact that patient follow-up will take longer than usual, as there is no way of knowing how long these communities will be cut off for.”

CheckUP equips GYHSAC with new eye equipment to support the vision health of the Yarrabah community

The Yarrabah Aboriginal Community, situated on Cape Grafton, 10kms due east of Cairns in Far North Queensland, has received a much-needed boost to its eye care services thanks to CheckUP. Through the Australian Government Department of Health's Visiting Optometrist Scheme (VOS), CheckUP were able to equip Gurriny Yealamucka Health Service Aboriginal Corporation (GYHSAC) with full refractive (eye testing) equipment, including a chair stand and phoropter, autorefractor, tonometer, slit lamp and fundus photography for their complete vision testing room.

GYHSAC is an Aboriginal community-controlled health service delivering primary healthcare within the Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire. Diabetes continues to be a major health issue for the community. GYHSAC reported in its 2021-2022 Annual Report that there were 458 patients with diabetes, and

current guidelines for Indigenous patients recommend an annual diabetic eye examination.

According to Victoria Sheehan, a Cairns-based optometrist who works at Wuchopperen Health Service and conducts fortnightly Outreach visits to Yarrabah, the new equipment will allow for a higher level of care to be provided to the community.

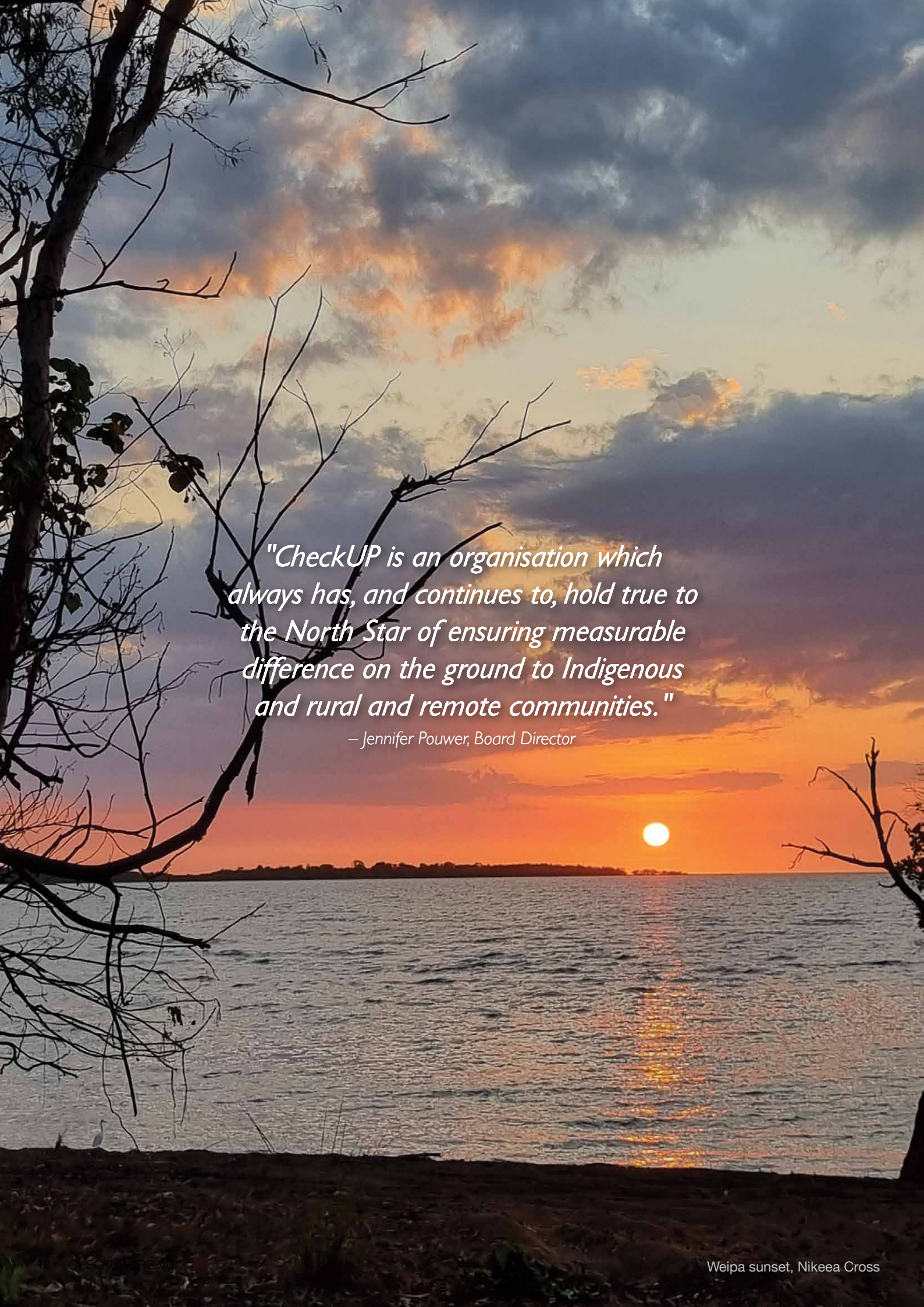
"Outreach visits allow for the same level of care as would be received in any suburban optometry practice," Victoria said.

"With the new equipment, comprehensive eye examinations can now be conducted. This allows for diabetic eye disease, cataracts, and trauma to be diagnosed and referred to ophthalmology in Cairns when needed without excess trips out of the community."

This initiative demonstrates the importance of community-led solutions and the impact they can have on health outcomes for Indigenous communities. The objective of the VOS is to improve the eye health of people in regional, rural and remote locations. CheckUP is proud to have been able to provide support to GYHSAC and the Yarrabah Aboriginal Community through this program.



RIGHT: Brand new equipment in the clinic.

A sunset over a body of water with silhouetted trees in the foreground. The sun is low on the horizon, casting a golden glow across the sky and reflecting on the water. The sky is filled with soft, colorful clouds in shades of orange, yellow, and blue. The foreground shows the dark silhouettes of trees and branches, some with a few leaves. The overall mood is peaceful and serene.

"CheckUP is an organisation which always has, and continues to, hold true to the North Star of ensuring measurable difference on the ground to Indigenous and rural and remote communities."

— Jennifer Pouwer, Board Director

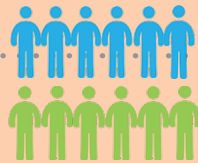
2022-2023

Outreach highlights

CheckUP is the jurisdictional fundholder for the Australian Government Department of Health's Outreach programs in Queensland. With the support of up to 150 contracted health providers, we lead a strong, effective consortium that is committed to improving access to a wide range of healthcare services in urban, rural, and remote locations and high-need populations throughout Queensland, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

177,883

Occasions of Service



occasions of service, or appointments, were delivered through all Outreach health services in 2022-23

111,050

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients



of all Outreach health services were accessed by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people

21,403

Visits



visits were undertaken by our team of Outreach health providers

174

Locations



towns and communities were provided with Outreach health services over the 12 month period



Audiologists visit Hope Vale classrooms

CheckUP's Outreach service providers, in partnership with the Hope Vale Primary Health Care Centre, successfully conducted audiology screenings in classrooms at Hope Vale.

Childhood ear health plays an important role in development as poor hearing health can have significant implications for language development, school engagement, and social-emotional wellbeing. Conducting classroom hearing screenings allows for early intervention and timely referrals for treatment. By identifying and addressing hearing issues at an early stage, children can receive the necessary support to excel in their communication, learning, and overall development.

An audiologist team, contracted as a CheckUP Outreach provider, visited Hope Vale during the school year in 2023.

During the visits, each Prep class achieved a 100% attendance rate for their screening appointments. Melanie Sheridan, CheckUP's Regional Coordinator for the area commented on the successful visit.

In addition to hearing screenings, CheckUP provides funding support for a variety of allied health Outreach providers to visit Hope Vale, including speech therapists and occupational therapists, who also play an important role in assisting children who have hearing issues.

"It's truly a great outcome to have achieved full attendance for the screening tests. When our Outreach providers visit local schools, children who may require additional support or treatment can be identified early."

– Melanie Sheridan

Consumer voices inform health service planning

What Queensland First Nations and non-Indigenous rural, remote and regional consumers want from their healthcare.

To understand both First Nations and non-Indigenous rural, remote, and regional consumers' healthcare experiences, CheckUP enlisted the expertise of Health Consumers Queensland (HCQ). Peer-led consultations were facilitated by HCQ using an evidence-based consumer engagement methodology. Kitchen table discussions (or yarning circles for First Nations hosts and participants) were held to hear rural, remote, and regional consumers' voices. The methodology was led by consumer hosts within their own communities and enabled health consumers to have their say in a safe, informal, and supportive environment.

62 consumers took part in discussions across 7 locations

The final report from HCQ titled *"Not a postcode lottery: What Queensland First Nations and non-Indigenous rural, remote & regional consumers want from their healthcare in 2023"* highlighted

that the health and wellbeing of Queensland's rural, remote and regional residents is directly and indirectly impacted by the social determinants of health, and that their experiences of healthcare moves beyond direct patient-provider interaction and into the broader healthcare system functions. By incorporating patients' experiences, needs, and preferences into the design process for Outreach services, meaningful co-design can foster more personalised, effective, and satisfying health services. Involving consumers as co-designers can bring fresh insights into healthcare delivery, challenge traditional assumptions, and lead to innovative solutions.

For CheckUP, this was powerful and authentic consumer engagement. The findings from these consultations are informing the delivery of our health and wellbeing services across Queensland. CheckUP would like to sincerely thank Health Consumers Queensland and all the consumers who took part in the project.

Consumer feedback themes

Key themes from First Nations consumers

- 1 We want culturally safe care and culturally safe healthcare systems.
- 2 We want to be treated with respect.
- 3 We want sovereignty, self-determination, and stewardship in health.
- 4 We want a well-resourced First Nations workforce.
- 5 We need culturally safe ways to make complaints.

Key themes from rural, regional and remote consumers (non-Indigenous)

- 1 We want better communication between healthcare services and community.
- 2 We want care in our community.
- 3 We want more services to reduce wait times.
- 4 We want easily accessible transport systems.
- 5 We want healthcare professionals who care.
- 6 We want continuity of care.
- 7 We want meaningful co-design.

Yarning circles and kitchen table discussions locations



Cataract surgery for

CheckUP, in collaboration with the Fred Hollows Foundation and the Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service (T&CHHS), are working together so patients from Cape York receive timely cataract surgery, as close to home as possible.

As a part of CheckUP's Eye and Ear Surgical Support (EESS) program 14 patients from several remote Cape York communities made the journey from the Cape to Cairns to receive the cataract surgery they needed. The Indigenous Eye Coordinator from TCHHS travelled with the patients, supporting them along the journey and assisting with their appointments.

Once in Cairns, long term Outreach provider, ophthalmologist Dr Brian Todd, reviewed the patients in his private clinic, Cairns Eye Surgery. He performed the surgeries in the days following at the Ramsay Surgical Centre Cairns.



Patients including Aunty Kathleen during their trip to Cairns.

Aunty Kathleen, a Traditional Owner from Wujal Wujal, was among the 14 patients who travelled to Cairns to receive cataract surgery. Sight is crucial to Aunty Kathleen, who runs a tourism business, The Walker Family Tours, with her family. A passionate teacher, Aunty Kathleen enjoys sharing her culture with tourists, teaching them about bush medicine during her tours.

Grateful for her surgery, Aunty Kathleen said of her surgery experience: "The people in there (theatre room) were very kind, gentle and helpful!"

"In the theatre room, it was like 'Bama' (Aboriginal people) and 'Waybla' (white people) together – working and helping."

The EESS program strives to address the identified barriers to accessing surgery and supports First Nations patients in priority locations. Funded by the Australian Department of Health under the Indigenous Australians' Health Program, the EESS program works towards a culturally appropriate delivery model, ensuring a safe and successful surgical journey for all patients.



Aunty Kathleen recuperating after surgery.

Cape communities

The surgical support team at Ramsay Surgical Centre Cairns.





Collaboration enhances eye care in Cherbourg

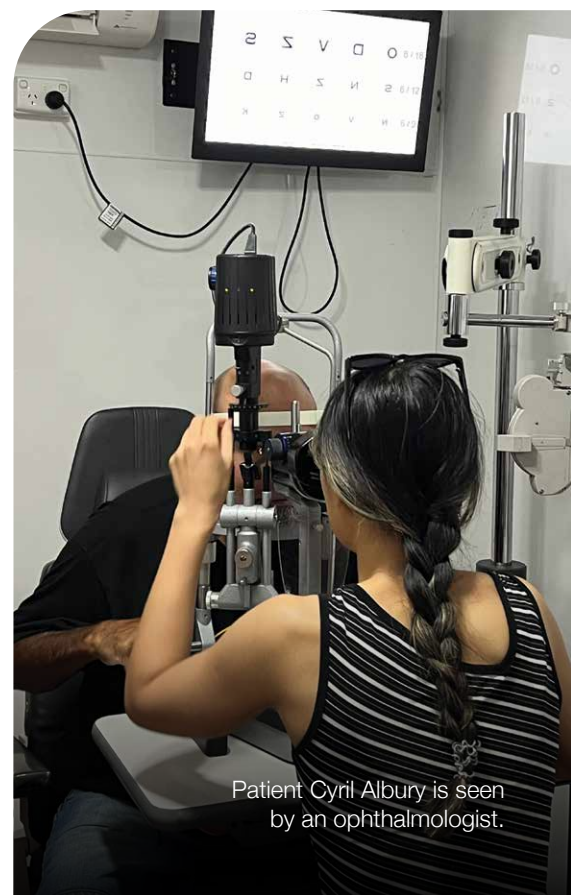
Since 2010, CheckUP's Indigenous Eye Health Program has supported state of the art ophthalmic services in communities through collaboration of services between Dr Rowan Porter – St John Eye Van, Dr Shelley Hopkins – Queensland University of Technology (QUT), and Cherbourg Regional Aboriginal and Islander Community Health Service (CRAICCHS).

Funding provided by CheckUP, through the Australian Government Department of Health and Aged Care Outreach programs, supports visiting healthcare teams to work collaboratively to manage and treat eye health issues and streamline the referral pathway for consumers in their community.

Pivotal to the success of the service is the dedication and hard work of CRAICCHS' local Allied Health Coordinator, Fabia Murray. Fabia assists with the coordination at a local level. She ensures consumers are aware of these visiting services and patients are supported to attend. The close partnership between the local coordinator, visiting optometrist

Dr Shelley Hopkins, and the St John Eye Van team ensures comprehensive eye health needs are met without extensive and intrusive travel to metropolitan areas. The visiting optometry clinic has expanded to include two optometrists and several QUT optometry students who provide 18 clinic days per year. Demand for the service is continuing to grow.

Students have the opportunity to use eye testing equipment including Optical Coherence Tomography (OCT) which provides cross-sectional scans of the retina, visual field testing, and retinal photography. More importantly, the service provides a diverse and culturally responsive approach



Patient Cyril Albury is seen by an ophthalmologist.

to monitoring eye health in community, preventing vision loss and establishing referral pathways.

One student shared their reflections on the visit, noting a key takeaway was witnessing and further understanding the importance of patient relationships developed within communities.

“Seeing the way the optometrists did the vision tests and how they managed different eye problems was very enlightening. I also learnt the trust the optometrists build with the patient and how they explain to the patient what is occurring in their eyes, is vital for the patients to keep returning to see them. I am grateful that I was able to see the importance of the optometrist to patient relationship and hope to be able to do the same once I am working.”

– QUT optometry student

In addition to optometry, specialised ophthalmic services are provided by Dr Porter and his team, who deliver their service in the mobile St John Eye Van. Together, the team manage common eye diseases such as refractive change, cataracts, and diabetic retinopathy, offering outpatient care to local patients within their community. Having this comprehensive care delivered locally reduces waitlists, helping to prevent avoidable blindness and vision impairment.

CheckUP is committed to continuing to support the evolving eye health needs of the community, fostering partnerships, and providing comprehensive on-site care for patients like Cyril Albury, pictured.

TOP RIGHT: Dr Shelley Hopkins and QUT optometry students pictured on their visit to Cherbourg.

RIGHT: Cherbourg local, Cyril Albury, has his eyes tested by optometrist Shelley Hopkins.



Cultural responsiveness training for improved healthcare outcomes

CheckUP is dedicated to collaborating with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and individuals to enhance their health and wellbeing. As part of this commitment, CheckUP introduced cultural responsiveness training in 2023, mandatory for all CheckUP staff and Outreach service providers. Since its introduction, 421 individuals have registered to complete the training.



Philippa Hawke meets with patient to evaluate culturally safe care.

Developed by Indigenous Allied Health Australia, a leading expert in cultural safety training, the online modules aim to cultivate inclusivity, respect, and understanding, ultimately enhancing healthcare outcomes through the delivery of culturally sensitive care.

Participation in this program equips CheckUP staff and Outreach providers with practical knowledge and skills, empowering them to improve cultural safety, transform and influence culturally responsive care and services, and lead culturally safe and accessible services.

CheckUP organisational members receive free access to the new training.

To support our member organisations in fostering cultural responsiveness among their staff, employees from each organisation can access the training program for free.

Understanding and acknowledging Australia's shared history, and celebrating and recognising Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and culture is key to achieving reconciliation. CheckUP looks forward to continuing to learn together.

25th Anniversary Artwork “A connected community”

To commemorate CheckUP's 25th Anniversary CheckUP commissioned Indigenous artist Leah Cummins to create an artwork to acknowledge this milestone. The artwork celebrates CheckUP's 25 year history and acknowledges the collaborative connections that exist between CheckUP, our partners, healthcare providers, and Queensland's diverse communities. Explaining the inspiration behind her art, Leah shared, “A *connected community* is a representation of the diverse and interconnected communities within the state of Queensland.” She added,

“This artwork serves as a reminder that despite our differences and geographical separations, we are all part of a larger whole and can come together in unity.”

About the artist

Leah Cummins is a proud Mayi woman from North West Queensland. Sharing her love of Indigenous art to the world as the owner of Bunya Designs, Leah finds inspiration in her cultural identity, relishing the opportunity to bring stories of her country and people to life in her art.



www.bunyadesigns.com.au

Are you looking for a new adventure?

Do you have a passion for working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and people living in rural and remote locations?

**Express your interest in becoming
an Outreach provider!**

The Outreach programs help improve health outcomes by increasing access to medical specialist, GP, and allied health professional services.

If you are a qualified, registered, and practising health professional within Australia and would like to find out more about how you can be involved in delivering Outreach health services in rural and remote communities across Queensland, simply complete and return the expression of interest form on CheckUP's website.

Funding may be available to assist with travel, accommodations, meals, and other administrative costs associated with the delivery of services.

You can learn more by visiting <https://www.checkup.org.au/outreach> or by emailing the team at outreachservices@checkup.org.au



Understanding healthcare barriers:

How disability awareness training has helped a CheckUP provider to deliver more insightful and holistic care



Dr Tom Dover with patient, Kelly Bancroft.

Dr Tom Dover, an experienced endocrinologist, dietitian, and exercise scientist, has been providing healthcare to communities in central and south-east Queensland for over seven years. As a CheckUP Outreach provider, Tom acknowledges the significance of understanding the healthcare access barriers faced by people with disability. He credits CheckUP's *Access for All: Disability awareness for mainstream health providers course* for providing him with, "a greater understanding of the impact of health services on people with disability."

Tom said the online course re-emphasised the importance of family, community, and support workers in

healthcare for people with disability. While he has always understood the imperative of patient-centred care, Tom had several "lightbulb moments" where he realised that various accommodations such as suitable transport, building access, accessible appointment scheduling, and appropriate clinic rooms are essential to cater for the numerous types of disability. By gaining a better understanding of these healthcare access barriers, Dr Dover feels better equipped to work with patients with disability to set goals that are meaningful and achievable for each individual person.

"It helps you to put the person in front of the patient," he said.

The majority of Tom's caseload is diabetes. As diabetes management requires a multidisciplinary approach, Tom believes all CheckUP Outreach providers would benefit from completing the *Access for All: Disability awareness for mainstream health providers course*. Further, he advocates that the course, "should be compulsory for all healthcare providers who work with people with disability".

Tom praised the course for its comprehensiveness, practicality, and relevance to all healthcare providers. He emphasised that he was struck by the course's, "practical, real-life examples".

"The course is full of practical stuff that impact on the day-to-day management of health conditions," he said.

"It is probably the best online course I have ever done."

Tom's experience highlights the importance of healthcare providers understanding and accommodating the needs of people with disability. The *Access for All* course serves as a valuable resource for healthcare providers, equipping them with practical knowledge to deliver insightful and holistic care.



Access for All:

Disability awareness training for health providers

Is your service accessible? Disability access is more than a ramp!

Why Access for All training?

- ✓ An interactive and engaging online course that is suitable for all health staff.
- ✓ Enhances person-centred care by creating awareness of the barriers people with disability experience when accessing health services.
- ✓ Provides strategies and resources to assist health providers reduce barriers and increase access to their services for people with disability.
- ✓ Assists health providers understand legislative obligations for providing equitable, inclusive care for people with disability.
- ✓ Includes the Access for All app which enables the player to experience healthcare through the eyes of people with disability.
- ✓ CPD points available for 35+ health professions.

Find the online training at: <https://accessforall-checkup.talentlms.com>



Scan the QR code to access the online training.

Embracing the spectrum:

For my son and a better tomorrow

Laura Zimmerman, Director at Macintyre Health, shares a powerful personal story. From encountering stigma as a child to her work in diabetes and metabolic health as a CheckUP Outreach service provider, Laura's journey emphasises the importance of understanding and embracing the strengths of individuals with autism and neurodivergence. In this article, Laura also discusses CheckUP's Access for All course for health providers.

It was 1991 and I was six years old, standing next to my mother in her favourite jewellery store in our small suburban town when a woman told her that I would struggle academically. "You will have to come to terms with it," the woman told her. "She's not smart. You will have to make plans for this. It's not fair to you and it's not fair to her." My speech was delayed until I was eight years old. I have encountered numerous levels of stigma throughout my life – yet this comment, when I was six years old never left me. Never underestimate the power of words.

Oliver Zimmerman

I have only recently started discussing my synaesthesia. I work in diabetes and metabolic health – everything is graphs and numbers. I can make connections and funding patterns that help serve rural and vulnerable communities. My singular focus allows me to achieve high marks in my post-graduation qualifications, start multiple businesses, and run clinics across half of Australia. People living with autism or neurodivergence are more than their list of perceived deficits. When understood, we contribute greatly to the world around us.

Macintyre Health was always built with inclusion in mind for those living with disability and neurodivergence. Our commitment to patient-centred care and flexible care delivery that accommodates individual and community needs has been supported by CheckUP since 2017.

Approximately 20% of Australia's population lives with a disability, with around 10% experiencing profound discrimination that hinders their day-to-day activities, including medical visits. This discrimination has tangible effects on their health and mental wellbeing. The healthcare system still struggles with addressing the historical and present stigma surrounding disability.



The Zimmerman family

CheckUP's Access for All training course bridges gaps in knowledge and experience that healthcare providers face in delivering patient-centred, culturally safe care to people with disability. This initiative, funded by the NDIA, equips healthcare providers like Macintyre Health with vital tools and resources for delivering person-centred care.

Inspired by reducing stigma, I've chosen to reveal my autism journey, driven by my son's diagnosis and the desire to reduce the stigma for him and others like us in accessing healthcare. This transformative decision has allowed me to unmask my struggles while celebrating the strengths that arise from my neurodivergence.

As a business owner living with autism, ADHD, and dyslexia, I recognise that individuals with firsthand knowledge of their conditions are the true experts in their lives. Sharing my experiences with disability can help me help others overcome stigma – creating more inclusivity and compassion. Openness fosters understanding and acceptance and empowers others to share their stories. Together, we can build healthier, more vibrant communities that celebrate and support disability and neurodiversity.

Strengthening First Nations workforce and business

Established as part of the Good people, Good jobs – Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022-2023, CheckUP's Industry Workforce Advisors (IWA) program provides tailored workforce planning assistance to small and medium employers, helping businesses diversify their workforce, address workforce challenges and increase workforce productivity and growth.

CheckUP in collaboration with Everywhen Workforce hosted the Strengthening First Nations Workforce and Business – Breakfast Event. Everywhen is an Aboriginal owned and led organisation created to unite Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australia for enduring change.

Held during Indigenous Business Month the event was well-attended, providing an opportunity for key leaders and businesses to connect with each other to discuss the key enablers to investment, growth and capacity building.

Indigenous Business Month occurs annually during October. Last year's theme, "To Gather, Together", called upon. First Nations business owners and their non-Indigenous allies, to

gather, online and in community, to inspire the next generation of First Nations business leaders.

Workforce development and growth featured as a key theme throughout the day. Event hosts Selena King, Executive Director of Everywhen Workforce, and Andy Legg, CheckUP's Industry Workforce Advisor for First Nations Health and Social Assistance, discussed current First Nations workforce trends before touching on sustainable ways to grow and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforces.

There was then a panel discussion featuring industry leaders, Luke Jeffery, Founder and Managing Director of Everywhen Group, Jesse Green, Owner and Managing



L-R: Andrew Legg, Jesse Green, Andrew Niven, Luke Jeffery and Selena King.

Director of Yilay, and Andrew Niven, Indigenous Partnerships Manager of Queensland Investment Corporation. They had an engaging and insightful discussion around the key issues facing First Nations businesses.

Nyaree Mewett, CheckUP's General Manager – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, described the event. *"It was amazing to see people from various industries come together to hear from industry leaders of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent who are redefining how we approach workforce and how assisting an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander business supports our people's right to self-determination and community."*



Strengthening First Nations Workforce and Business Breakfast Event.

Unlocking the future of healthcare: Bridging the gap between education and industry

The Health Gateway to Industry Schools Program plays a crucial role in addressing workforce shortages and bridging the gap between schools, education, and the health industry.

This program serves as a valuable platform that enables students to gain early exposure, practical knowledge, and hands on experience in the healthcare field while still in school to encourage students to pursue further education and training in healthcare disciplines, ultimately helping to fill workforce gaps.

CheckUP has seen a significant growth in the program over the

last year with 63 secondary schools joining the program since its inception in 2020 through a formal Memorandum of Understanding. In addition to this, the Health Gateway Program has made remarkable progress in fostering partnerships with the health industry including Metro North Health, Gold Coast Health, St Vincent's Private Hospital, Buderim Private Hospital,

Australian Dental Association of Queensland, and Cairns Private Hospital just to name a few. These partnerships have opened a world of opportunities for students seeking industry exposure, work experience, and school-based traineeships and has paved the way for students to explore the diverse range of healthcare roles, enabling them to make informed career choices.

Igniting the future of healthcare: Bentley Park College unveils groundbreaking Medical Training Precinct

Bentley Park College (BPC) was the first school to join forces with the Health Gateway Program, becoming a pioneer in Queensland's education sector. Their collaboration with CheckUP has yielded incredible results, empowering students to explore the variety of career pathways within the health industry. Now, BPC proudly presents the Medical Training Precinct, a cutting-edge facility aimed at inspiring high school students to pursue healthcare professions.

Valued at \$1.38 million, this exceptional precinct is designed to equip students with the necessary skills and experiences while still

in school. Among its outstanding features are an ICU and GP training space, enabling students to complete certificate studies and jumpstart their careers. To enhance the learning experience, the Medical Training Precinct will incorporate state-of-the-art ICT Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality tools. BPC plans to extend its reach beyond its own walls, sharing learning pathways with schools throughout Queensland.

Through strategic partnerships with other schools in Cairns, BPC aims to provide students with access to the remarkable resources available at the precinct. Moreover, the school-based VET training is available even

during holidays, ensuring ample opportunities for students to upskill and gain practical experience. The Medical Training Precinct serves as a direct pathway to TAFE or university, with successful students having the opportunity to apply for credits towards their chosen courses.

The Medical Training Precinct would not have been possible without the unwavering commitment and support of Clive Skarott, Chair of the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service. The Cairns Hospital is dedicated to offering employment opportunities to BPC health graduates, with a special emphasis on increasing the representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals in the workforce. BPC is committed to continuing its partnership with the Health Gateway Program, ensuring students have access to the finest training and exceptional career prospects.



LEFT: Bentley Park College Medical Training Precinct in action.

RIGHT: Sabrina Kerr (Gateway Schools Manager) providing a health careers talk to Lourdes Hill College students.

The Health Gateway Program also offers professional development opportunities for educators and teaching staff. The second Health Gateway Schools Forum was held on 14 October of 2022, with 105 delegates attending from secondary schools, registered training organisations and the health industry across Queensland. These events are designed to bring together key stakeholders to obtain an update on the health industry, learn about successful models, develop new partnerships, and network with colleagues.

Over the coming years, addressing workforce shortages for disadvantaged groups including youth from regional and remote

Queensland, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and those from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds will continue to be a key focus for program. The Health Gateway Program will also continue to build health industry partnerships to create

greater opportunities for students to gain industry exposure, work experience, and school-based traineeships to enable hands-on learning and to develop vital skills within the healthcare sector.



Empowering the next generation: Inspiring students at St Vincent's Private Hospital



St Vincent's Private Hospital, Kangaroo Point, recently buzzed with excitement as it played host to an extraordinary event. CheckUP, in collaboration with St Vincent's Private Hospital Brisbane, welcomed

a group of eager students from St Rita's College in Clayfield and Lourdes Hill College in Hawthorne for an unforgettable industry tour and information session. This exceptional opportunity allowed these young minds to witness firsthand the vast array of roles and careers available within a hospital and aged care setting.

The event kicked off with an up-close and personal look at the diverse range of professions within the healthcare industry. From administration and nursing to food services, operational roles, rehabilitation, and allied health, the students were exposed to a multitude of possibilities.

What truly made this experience extraordinary was the invaluable insights shared by the dedicated staff at St Vincent's Private Hospital. These healthcare professionals generously offered glimpses into

their personal career journeys. The stories and experiences shared served as a true inspiration, igniting a passion within these young individuals, and motivating them to pursue careers in healthcare.

Thanks goes out to the entire team at St Vincent's Private Hospital for their support and tireless efforts in organising this opportunity. The students were fortunate to be guided by such compassionate and knowledgeable mentors, who devoted their time to shaping the healthcare professionals of tomorrow.

As we look to the future, it is vital that we empower our youth with events like these. Together, organisations like St Vincent's Private Hospital and educational institutions can collaborate to nurture and inspire the next generation of healthcare professionals.

ABOVE: Sabrina Kerr (Gateway Schools Manager) with St Rita's College students undertaking a tour of St Vincent's Private Hospital.



New YIPEE project fosters successful school-to-work transitions for students in FNQ

CheckUP initiated the Youth Industry Partnerships for Education and Employment project (YIPEE) in 2022, with funding from the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT).

The YIPEE project aims to foster effective school-to-work transitions for schools with a significant proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students in Far North Queensland, through the implementation of partnerships and support provided by CheckUP's Student Industry Transition Officer

YIPEE focuses on creating and supporting sustainable pathways for students as they transition beyond school, through further education, employment, or training.

It assists students in finding and preparing for work experience or structured work placements, acts

as a liaison with employers, and provides comprehensive support to students and employers throughout the process.

By bridging the gap between education and employment, YIPEE ensures students receive the guidance and resources needed to thrive in their chosen career paths.

For the local health industry, it's an opportunity to collaborate with six schools with a significant proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, to develop partnerships to support more effective school-to-work transitions.

The project supports students to pursue a career in the health sector, thereby assisting in the development of a reliable and skilled workforce, and potentially addressing existing and anticipated skill shortages.

If you would like to learn more or become involved in the YIPEE project, please email CheckUP's Student Industry Transition Officer at dglover@checkup.org.au or visit the CheckUP website.

YIPEE project success

Currently, the YIPEE project operates in six schools in the Cairns region, and has recently expanded to include four schools in Townsville. CheckUP's Student Industry Transition Officer works in close collaboration with VET teachers to create diverse opportunities for students to explore the multitude of career paths available in the health industry.

For many students, their participation in the YIPEE project represents their first-ever experience in the workforce through work experience or work placements. We strive to enhance students' knowledge and understanding of the diverse roles within the healthcare workforce.

Student experiences with YIPEE



ABOVE: Edmonton Ambulance Career Pathway Education at Bentley Park College.

TOP LEFT AND BELOW:
Djarragun College students training at
Gurriny Yealamucka Health Service.



Students from Djarragun College in Gordonvale had an exceptional opportunity to undertake their work experience at Gurriny Yealamucka Health Service, situated in the Yarrabah community.

The staff at the health clinic warmly embraced the students and provided them with valuable hands-on experience in the healthcare field. Witnessing the students thrive in their respective roles was inspiring. The graciousness and support exhibited by the hosting staff was remarkable.

The YIPEE project expressed gratitude to Gurriny Yealamucka Health Clinic for creating an unforgettable and enriching student experience.

Bentley Park College students enjoyed training from Edmonton Ambulance Officers, Michelle and Clay, who kindly donated their time during Edmonton Ambulance Careers Pathways Day.

It was a pleasure to see the immense level of engagement displayed by the students during the careers talk on the day. The hands-on learning experience provided was invaluable and left a lasting impact on those present. The officers' words of wisdom and personal experiences ignited a strong sense of motivation and enthusiasm among students.

CheckUP appreciates the Edmonton Ambulance Officers' support and dedication. They have helped to enlighten and inspire future healthcare workers.



Promoting mental health and wellbeing across Queensland

A record-breaking 529 Queensland Mental Health Week events were registered in 2023. Communities from Killarney to Boulia and all the way up to Coen took part in the week to raise awareness of mental health, increase understanding of mental illness, and reduce stigma.

CheckUP coordinated Queensland Mental Health Week (QMHW) on behalf of the Queensland Mental Health Commission for the sixth year in 2023. Supported by strong cross-sector collaboration, Queensland Mental Health Week aims to shine a spotlight on individual and community mental health and wellbeing. Taking place from 7-15 October in 2023, the theme, "Awareness, Belonging, Connection", reflected the important factors that help people maintain positive mental health and wellbeing. Queensland Mental Health Commissioner Ivan Frkovic commented on the importance of the annual initiative.

"Over 40 percent of Australians are estimated to have experienced a mental disorder at some time in their life," Mr Frkovic said.

"Queensland Mental Health Week reaches into communities across Queensland and gives us all the chance to take stock how we're going connect with our loved ones, community or colleagues."

To further support QMHW, CheckUP coordinates a community event grants program. In 2023, the Queensland Mental Health Commission provided \$130,000 in grant funding, which was awarded to 157 applicants all over Queensland. Funding recipients included schools, workplaces, health services, sports clubs, community organisations, and more.

"Our event was a huge success. Some attendees mentioned that they had left the house for the event for the first time in a long time. Tears were shed, lived experience was shared, and people walked away feeling inspired to help others in the community."

– Grant recipient, Gold Coast

"The intergenerational participation was heartening, showcasing how art, mindfulness, and the healing power of nature can provide a common platform for building resilience and support networks."

– Grant recipient, Toowoomba



ABOVE: The CheckUP team joined Minister Shannon Fentiman at the Queensland Parliament QMHW event.

Partially funded with a QMHW grant, ASMY's Kirtan for Peace event featured guided meditation, yoga, dance and community singing.



Save the date for Queensland Mental Health Week 2024 – Saturday 5 October to Sunday 13 October.



Landmarks across Queensland including the Story bridge were lit up purple and green for QMHW.



For 24/7 crisis support, call Lifeline on 13 11 14, or the Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467. In an emergency, call 000.

Recovered Futures Art Exhibition: Over 30 years of showcasing artists with lived mental health experience



Richmond Fellowship Queensland (RFQ) is a not-for-profit organisation dedicated to supporting people in recovery. From working in acute mental health wards and correctional facilities, to keeping people healthy in the community, RFQ's vision captures the passion and conviction of their work: *A future recovered for people facing mental health challenges and social disadvantage.*

Recovered Futures: a flagship Queensland Mental Health Week event

RFQ have been a valued CheckUP member since 2019 and have worked closely with CheckUP

on Queensland Mental Health Week (QMHW). RFQ hosts the Recovered Futures Art Exhibition, a major QMHW event that showcases art from people with lived mental health experience. They also have staff representation on the QMHW Reference Group and Working Group – both of which guide the overall direction of Queensland Mental Health Week.

The 2023 Recovered Futures Art Exhibition was held from 6 to 12 October in Brisbane's bustling city centre – King George Square. Occurring during Queensland Mental Health Week, the iconic exhibition showcased 270 diverse artworks by people of all ages and walks of life.

Now in its 32nd year, the exhibition has grown and evolved, yet has always stayed true to its mission – harnessing the powerful medium of art to spark meaningful conversations about mental health, recovery, and wellbeing. The 2023 exhibition was a resounding success! Showcasing 271 artworks by 169 artists, the event attracted over 13,250 visitors and achieved over \$77,000 in artwork sales, the highest in its history.

“Through being involved in the Recovered Futures Art Exhibition, I felt a sense of community, connection, understanding, and support. I spend so much time alone, but the exhibition showed me that there is a strong network out here. We're not meant to walk through this world on our own and we never were.”

– Chante Ranclaud, exhibiting artist and 2023 artist in residence

ABOVE: Viewing artwork at the 2023 Recovered Futures Exhibition.

LEFT: The RFQ team during the 2023 Recovered Futures Exhibition.

CheckUP's Queensland Primary Health Care Network event series

CheckUP hosts four Queensland Primary Health Care Network (QPHCN) events every year. These bring together CheckUP member organisations, CheckUP Outreach providers, health professionals and clinicians, government representatives, and the health and community sector more broadly. Featuring engaging presentations, our events offer valuable insights and foster collaboration for improving the health and wellbeing of Queenslanders. We would like to express our gratitude to all the speakers and event attendees who were part of the QPHCN event series in 2023.



The first QPHCN event of 2023 focused on skills and training for the future health workforce. During the event, Brett Hall from the Department of Employment, Small Business and Training discussed the Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022–2032. Dr. Joseph Occhino, Assistant Deputy Director-General at Queensland Health, spoke about the Queensland Government's plans specific to the health sector, acknowledging challenges and discussing improvements for the future. Giovanna Castellani from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Division, Queensland Health and Karen Lavery from the Australian Government Department of Employment and Workplace Relations also shared insights on workforce planning benefits.

Held during National Reconciliation Week, the focus of CheckUP's second QPHCN event was reconciliation. The event began with a performance by the Nunukul Yuggera Aboriginal Dance Company. Kieran Chilcott, CEO at Kalwun Development Corporation, led the event, and guest speakers discussed efforts in reconciliation. Speakers included Edward Mosby, founder of Wakai Waian Healing, and members of the CheckUP Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Advisory Committee.

The third QPHCN of 2023 focused on mental health and wellbeing, emphasising that good mental health is the foundation for thriving individuals, families, and communities. Updates about programs and initiatives in the sector were shared by guest speakers, including Ivan Frkovic, Queensland Mental Health Commissioner, Jennifer Black, CEO, Queensland Alliance for Mental Health, and Toniele Williams, Service Manager, Accoras. CheckUP also shared information about how to get involved with Queensland Mental Health Week 2023, an initiative that we have coordinated since 2018.

The final QPHCN event of the year coincided with Disability Action Week, celebrating the contributions of people with disability. The event showcased a diverse range of speakers, including Dr Dinesh Palipana OAM,

Brent Phillips from Deaf Connect, Emma Lynam, Cody Skinner, and CheckUP's Amanda Frier — who shared insights on accessibility, inclusion, and purpose. An online attendee expressed, *"Although I couldn't attend in person, I joined online and honestly thought it was incredibly inspiring. Every presentation was interesting and engaging, and I loved hearing the personal journeys – gave me goosebumps."*

We are grateful to HESTA for their longstanding support as the sponsor of the QPHCN events. We look forward to continuing the QPHCN event series throughout 2024.

TOP LEFT: Aaron Ruska from Nunukul Yuggera Aboriginal Dance Company opened the Reconciliation QPHCN event with a didgeridoo performance.

BELOW: QPHCN - Disability Action Week. Back L-R Nanita Smith, Brent Philips, David Millichap, Cody Skinner. Front: Amanda Frier, Dr Dinesh Palipana OAM.



Join the CheckUP Community and help champion health equity



Stay connected. Stay informed. Stay involved.

Creating healthier communities and reducing health inequities is at the heart of all that CheckUP does. However, this cannot be achieved in isolation. It requires a genuine and continued commitment to working with other like-minded organisations and individuals.

Our membership program strengthens our role as a connector, bringing together a group of people from across the health and community services sector united in a passion for better health for people and communities that need it most. It is simple to become a member and each membership option comes with great benefits.

Stay connected!

- Expand your networks by regularly engaging with key strategic stakeholders.
- Increase your visibility by having your events, programs, training sessions, and job opportunities shared in our eNewsletter.
- Attend free member networking events.

Stay informed!

- Build expertise and better understand the state of the primary health sector and emerging health workforce trends.
- Receive regular CheckUP eNewsletters to keep you abreast of current issues and trends.
- Leverage and share knowledge, expertise, and resources with other member organisations.

Stay involved!

- Strengthen your capacity for action through training and networking opportunities, accessing resources, and sharing knowledge and best practices.
- Provide input into policy development and advocacy initiatives.
- Create organisational efficiencies using our wide range of business support services.
- Nominate a representative to attend and vote at CheckUP Annual General Meetings.

Apply for membership today

To apply for CheckUP membership:
Register online at www.checkup.org.au
Contact CheckUP on **07 3105 8300**

Reflecting on 17 years with CheckUP

2023 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of CheckUP as an entity, and the ten-year anniversary of the organisation now known as CheckUP. Qld Divisions of General Practice and General Practice Queensland were the trading names of the companies that preceded CheckUP.



David Millichap receiving the painting “Spring Water” from Aunty Venus Rabbitt, Wakka Wakka people, Cherbourg.

One of CheckUP’s employees who has worked for all three entities, General Manager Engagement and Business Development David Millichap, reflects on his 17 years as an employee of all three organisations.

Some periods of one’s life are long and memorable. For example, I went to school for 12 years. University for four years. I worked at two previous jobs for about seven years each. All significant periods of time and memorable in different ways. However, I never dreamed that I would work at one organisation for 17 years! That’s simply unheard of these days, and this eventuality was not in my five-year plan when asked during my job interview.

But that’s what has transpired, seemingly in the blink of an eye. Surprisingly, I’m not the longest-serving team member (I’m holding the bronze medal position). Over the course of my time here, I’ve shared this journey with a group of colleagues, all of who nearly match my tenure. That speaks volumes about this place now known as CheckUP.

I’ve been asked to reflect on this time period for this anniversary edition of IMPACT and there are two main things that come to mind

– my colleagues, and the people we have helped along the way through our range of programs and services.

It may sound trite but many of the people I have worked with during this period are now my closest friends and feel like family. I hope you’ve had or will have the opportunity at some point in your career to work with people who you feel this way about. It has made coming to work a joyous experience (most days!) and has made the 17 years fly by.

My job has involved lots of time sitting at a computer typing words, like I’m doing now. But luckily, I have had many opportunities to interact directly with the people who CheckUP is committed to assisting through initiatives such as our cataract surgery program. Uncle Henry. Aunty Gladys. Aunty Venus. People whose names I will never forget as their humility, strength and gentle natures were so memorable.

We called this magazine IMPACT as that’s the effect we hoped our programs were having on people. But on reflection, the reverse has been true. The impact of assisting and talking with our First Nations’ Elders has been profound for me, as it has been for my colleagues. It’s what has defined my 17 years of working at CheckUP.



Gallery of annual photo competition entries submitted

CheckUP would like to thank the entrants in our 2023 photo competition. The images and stories that accompanied them were inspiring, making it difficult to select the winners. Below is a compilation of some of the fabulous entries that came our way. Enjoy, and keep snapping to get ready for next year's competition.



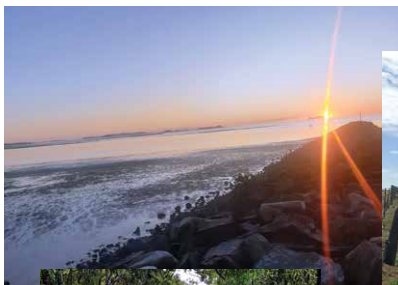
Congratulations to our competition winners...

Natural environment category winner (L) – Lieu-Chi Nguyen

Human interest category winner (M) – Jordyn Garner

People's choice winner (R) – Jan Roma

Submission highlights...





CheckUP staff and board respectfully acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land on which we work and live, and recognise their continuing connection to the land, water and community. We pay respect to Elders past and present, and future leaders. CheckUP strongly supports equality for all. We embrace diversity and condemn any kind of discrimination, be it on the basis of race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability.

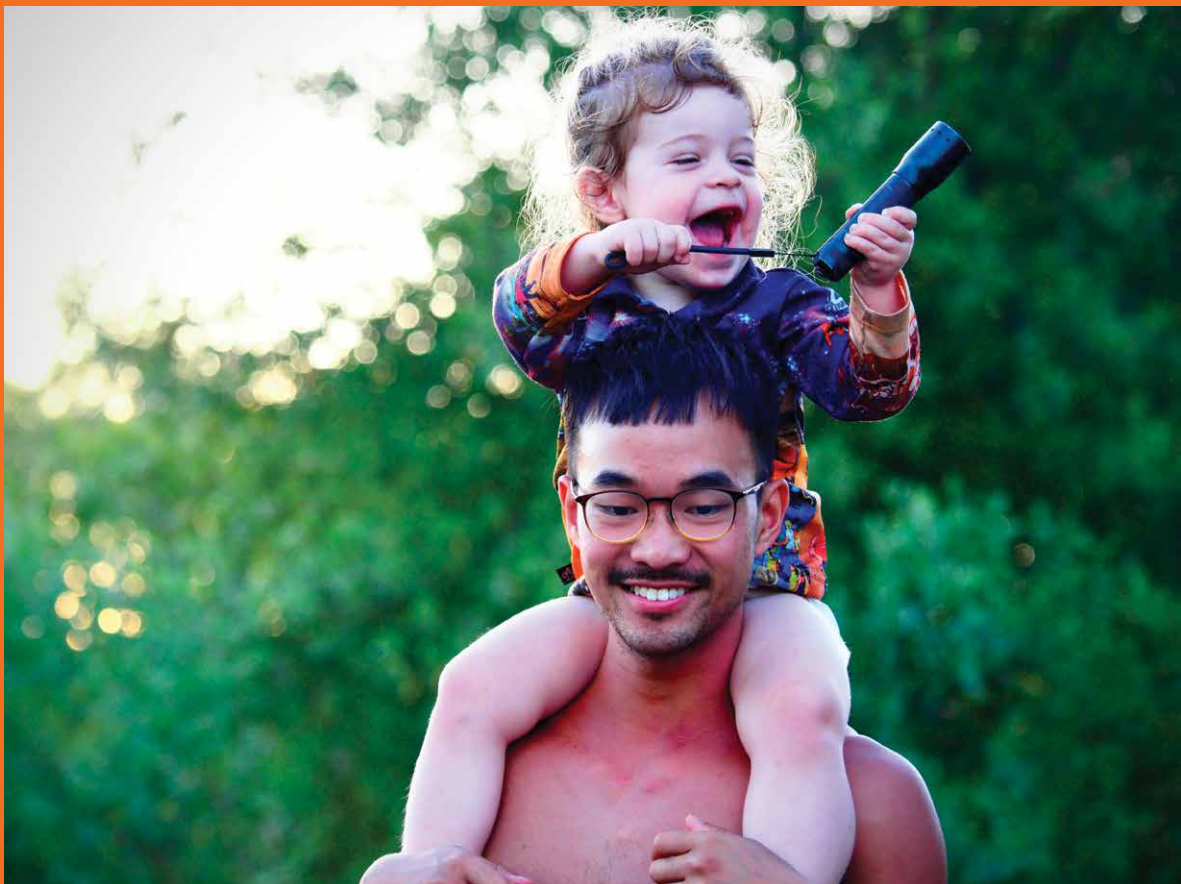


Image by Jordyn Garner, winner of CheckUP's Annual Photo Competition "Human Interest" category.



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