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Artwork throughout by Riki Salam, We Are 27 Creative.



Pictured above (left-right): Board Director Jody Currie, with Board Chair Dr Anita Green and PHN CEO Libby Dunstan.

## AGM ELECTS FIRST INDIGENOUS BOARD DIRECTOR

Mununjahli Yugambah woman Jody Currie has become the first Indigenous Australian elected to the Brisbane North PHN Board of Directors, following the organisation's Annual General Meeting (AGM) held on Wednesday 11 November 2020.

Ms Currie is the Chief Executive Officer of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Service (ATSICHS) Brisbane. She has held various senior executive roles in areas of early childhood education, and health and human service delivery, and is an advocate for improving service accessibility to vulnerable communities.

Ms Currie is a member of the Australian Institute of Company Directors, and currently a Non-Executive Director on the Hearing Australia Board. She has worked in a number of senior executive positions in both the government and non-government sectors, including the Queensland Aboriginal and Islander Health Council, Apunipima Cape York Health Council and the Institute for Urban Indigenous Health.



Pictured above (left-right): the PHN's Board of Directors - Dr Patricia Baker, Ms Jody Currie, Mr Mark Henley, Ms Kathy Campbell, Mr Stan Macionis, Dr Jennifer Schafer and Dr Anita Green.

Brisbane North PHN Chief Executive Officer Libby Dunstan congratulated Ms Currie on her election and said the PHN would benefit enormously from her extensive experience in Indigenous health and community services.

“Jody is a proud First Nations woman who has dedicated herself to improving the health and wellbeing of her people. It is fitting to announce Jody’s election during NAIDOC Week, which celebrates the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples,” Ms Dunstan said.

In other AGM announcements, Dr Anita Green and Kathy Campbell were returned as Board Directors.

Ms Dunstan welcomed the return of Dr Green and Ms Campbell to the Board and noted their significant contributions.

“Kathy’s work has been invaluable as the Chair of our Community Advisory Committee and a member of our Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee.

“Likewise, we owe a great debt to Anita for her many years’ service as our Board Chair. I am grateful for her leadership,” Ms Dunstan said.

During the Board meeting on 25 November 2020, office bearers were elected.

- **Dr Anita Green** is elected as Chair of the Board
- **Dr Jenny Schafer** as Deputy Chair of the Board
- **Mr Mark Henley** as Chair of the Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee
- **Mr Stan Macionis** as Chair of the Governance Committee
- **Dr Trish Baker** as Chair of the Clinical Council
- **Ms Kathy Campbell** as Chair of the Community Advisory Committee.

Read more about the PHN’s activities in our 2019/20 Year in Review, available at [brisbanenorthphn.org.au/yearinreview](https://brisbanenorthphn.org.au/yearinreview).



# MUMS AND BUBS ‘STARTING WELL’ IN CABOOLTURE

Brisbane North PHN and Metro North Hospital and Health Service’s Health Alliance is working in partnership with Caboolture Hospital Maternity Services and Children’s Health Queensland’s Child Health Service to co-design and implement a new pathway of antenatal and postnatal care in Caboolture.

Known as the *Starting Well Initiative*, the new pathway of care enrolled its first pregnant women in February 2020. Approaching its first anniversary next month, fifty families have participated in the pathway with glowing feedback.

Focused on providing continuity of midwifery care and warm transitions to the child health service, the model is supported by the co-location of midwives to support families with higher needs in Caboolture, Caboolture South and Morayfield.

Families get to know and trust a named midwife throughout their pregnancy and after birth; they are introduced to the child health service during their pregnancy; and receive a joint midwife and child health nurse home visit to transition care. There is increased communication and connection to the family GP throughout the pathway.

The pathway focusses on relational care, enabling professionals in antenatal and postnatal care to work together to wrap around a family and their new baby.

“The opportunity to build relationships and most importantly, trust, is proving to be highly regarded by women and families,” said Rebecca Zgrajewski, *Starting Well Initiative* midwife.

The program has been co-designed with local midwives, nurses, GPs and families, and has been implemented within existing resources thanks to the vision and dedication of these clinicians.

One of the mothers involved with the program said the experience of being part of the *Starting Well Initiative* felt both personalised and highly supportive.

“I felt the most cared for out of all three of my pregnancies and post-birth too. The midwife and child health nurse are wonderful at what they do,” she said.

An evaluation is currently underway. Early findings include a less than one per cent fail-to-attend rate and a higher than average birth weight compared to the broader maternity service.

The Health Alliance and partners are exploring opportunities to upscale the model to ensure more children in Caboolture have the best start to life.

For more information contact Health Alliance Development Lead, Mary Smareglia via [mary.smareglia@brisbanenorthphn.org.au](mailto:mary.smareglia@brisbanenorthphn.org.au) or call 07 3630 7300.

Pictured below (left-right): Natalie Morris, Joanne Millward, Belinda Mathieson, Mary Smareglia, Jeanelle Gibson, Lee-Anne O’Keefe, Julie Thomas, Rebecca Zgrajewski, Jodie Muller.





## NEW HEADSPACE STRATHPINE CENTRE OPENS ACCORDING TO PLAN

Opening ahead of schedule, headspace Strathpine is now providing free or low-cost Medicare services to young people in Strathpine and the surrounding region.

The Australian Government-funded service is a holistic mental health service for young people aged 12–25, and provides mental health, physical health (including sexual health), alcohol and other drugs or work and study support. Strathpine local Jesse Cotter was thrilled to hear the service had opened. She had participated in the initial community consultation and tender selection panel, and is now on the headspace Strathpine Youth Reference Group.

“It was amazing to be a part of the process of seeing a headspace go from paper to reality. It will be great to have a locally relevant youth mental health services that can tackle the presenting issues in our community,” Ms Cotter said.

Brisbane North PHN Executive Manager for Commissioned Services Paul Martin thanked lead agency Open Minds for its work setting up the new headspace centre, saying it would improve functioning of the local health system.

“headspace Strathpine will make an important contribution to mental health in an underserved part of the Brisbane North PHN region,” Mr Martin said.

“We are fully focused on implementing the objectives and actions of the region’s five-year joint regional mental health plan. These include ensuring that young people and their families can more easily access the right support when they need it,” he said.

Brisbane North PHN and Metro North Hospital and Health Service have jointly sponsored the *Planning for Wellbeing* regional plan to improve mental health, suicide prevention

and alcohol and other drug treatment services.

Work undertaken under the plan has already secured additional funding for existing headspace centres in the region to better support young people with more complex needs, and has delivered outreach support to Bribie Island and the Kilcoy region.

“I urge service providers and consumers to visit [planningforwellbeing.org.au](http://planningforwellbeing.org.au) to see how we are working together to help improve the lives of those affected by mental illness, suicide or problematic drug use,” he said.

The PHN announced in June 2020 that an Open Minds-led consortium would run headspace Strathpine, following its successful application through a competitive tender process.

In a media announcement, Federal Member for Dickson Peter Dutton said COVID-19 had increased demand for mental health services and that headspace Strathpine would help meet this demand.

“Given the urgency arising from the pandemic, the Australian Government was determined to deliver this new headspace centre as quickly as possible,” Mr Dutton said.

“Improving mental health and suicide prevention remains one of our Government’s highest priorities and this new centre will help many young people in our community for years to come.”

headspace Strathpine is located at 441 Gympie Road, Strathpine. To make an appointment, call 07 3465 3000 or visit [headspace.org.au](http://headspace.org.au).



# Scholarship graduates ready to empower palliative care patients

Palliative care scholarship recipients Kathryn Hooper, Lynne Meggison, Jane Stephens and Lynn Knowles have spoken about what an honour it is to be able to offer guidance to patients at the end of their lives.

During 2020, Brisbane North PHN provided funding to upskill the local workforce through the palliative care scholarship program. The PHN offered two scholarships for students within the Masters of Palliative Care, as well as six Graduate Certificate in Palliative Care scholarships.

Palliative care nurse practitioners possess highly advanced nursing skills and provide support to patients with complex palliative care needs.

These qualifications allow nursing staff to develop high levels of communication and leadership skills, and advanced clinical knowledge in specialised fields of practice.

As of December 2020, scholarship recipients have either completed or are close to graduating. Many have been supporting vulnerable community members, studying throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and juggling family commitments.

Masters of Palliative Care graduate and Worimi woman Kathryn Hooper said the scholarship program had allowed her to embark on postgraduate studies in a supported and sustainable way.

*“This was something that I felt was financially unsustainable until I had this opportunity. In every moment of self-doubt and success I have always been able to maintain a sense of accomplishment knowing that so many people were anticipating and wanting me to achieve and be successful,” she said.*

Kathryn currently works at St Vincent’s Hospital in Brisbane within the specialist community palliative care team. She has also worked at Karuna Hospice for many years as a Clinical Nurse (CN) and a CN/Educator within the aged care and public health sectors.

In Ms Hooper’s experience, palliative care empowers not only patients but patients’ families as well.

“It is not an area of practice where patients are identified by bed numbers, routines and tasks. Palliative care



Above: Palliative care scholarship recipients Lynn Knowles and Kathryn Hooper, pictured in 2019 at the scholarship award ceremony.

empowers patient autonomy and self-determination, patients and families are at the forefront and care goals are directed by them,” Ms Hooper said.

Scholarship recipient Jane Stephens said she enjoys working as a palliative care nurse practitioner as it offers her a more holistic view of her patients.

“I like that unlike many other specialties, palliative considers the person as a whole, requiring not only an ability to assess and treat symptoms, but also to look at the person’s psychosocial and spiritual needs. I enjoy the connections made with patients and their families, and I have the added bonus of working in the community where I see people in their home environments,” Ms Stephens said.

To scholarship graduate Lynne Meggison, palliative care practise is a natural extension of nursing.

*“I have always been interested in palliative care and supporting the patient and their family through a journey of care. To me it is just natural for a nurse to support a patient at the end of life,” she said.*

Lynn Knowles said palliative care patient advocacy forms a vitally important part of her work.

“Being an advocate for that person, it is my job to ensure that patient choices or advance health directives are completed early, in order that their wishes can be put in place to ensure that not only the family but the palliative team carry them out as best they can,” Ms Knowles said.

The longer-term goal of the scholarship program is to build a network of palliative care nurse practitioners across acute, community, aged and primary care with more effective and accessible services.

The program also aims to improve communication between services and provide better support to patients navigating the system.

The PHN congratulates all recent graduates and wishes them the best for the next stage of their careers.

# Aged care forum focuses on workforce growth

On Wednesday 25 November the Brisbane North Aged Care forum was held virtually, providing people working in the local health and aged care sectors with an opportunity to come together to further their professional development and education.

This year's Aged Care forum focussed on providing employment solutions for the sector to access a skilled aged care workforce, ensuring they can meet aged care needs now and into the future.

The event was chaired by Bolton Clarke Operations Manager, Anja Piggott and featured speakers from Community Services Industry Alliance, Leading Aged Services Australia and Brisbane North PHN.

The program also featured interviews with consumer representatives, Val and Anna, who shared their personal experiences with the Psychology in Aged Care (PAC) Wellbeing Program run by Change Futures.

The program offers structured psychological therapies that support people with mental health needs living in residential aged care facilities.

The service aims to support residents experiencing depression or anxiety and those having trouble adjusting to changes or coping with loss.

The PHN's Manager for Healthy Ageing, Julie Morrow, and Evaluation and Reporting Officer, Amalia Savini spoke on measuring the quality of life of people receiving Commonwealth Home Support Programme Services using the Adult Social Care Outcomes Toolkit (ASCOT).

The ASCOT initiative reflects the consortium's commitment to a performance-oriented culture and improving service provision through evidence-based data collection.

To watch all of the presentations from the  
2020 Aged Care forum visit:

<https://bnphn.org/aged-care-forum>.



Photos taken at the 2019 Aged Care forum.



Pictured left: Dr Miia Rajha  
Below: Michelle Tran (right)



## Memorial scholarships awardees announced

The Australian Healthcare and Hospitals Association (AHHA) recently announced the award of the 2021 Jeff Cheverton Memorial Scholarship. The scholarship was awarded to Michelle Tran from the University of Queensland for her timely research into the opportunities and challenges of telehealth in Australia and Dr Miia Rajha from Flinders University, who is researching rehabilitation programs for people with dementia.

The Jeff Cheverton Memorial Scholarship was established in 2017 by AHHA, together with North Western Melbourne PHN and Brisbane North PHN, to honour the memory of Jeff Cheverton (1968-2017), who demonstrated excellence in health leadership.

The Jeff Cheverton scholarship supports high achieving medical students, PhD candidates and early career researchers to specifically develop a health policy issues brief on a topic relevant to primary health, mental health, aged care, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, or LGBTQI health.

Working alongside staff at AHHA, scholarship recipients are supported to establish connections with policymakers and practitioners working in their field of research, and to produce a Health Policy Issues Brief that engages

health policy leaders in an area of national health policy significance.

The Jeff Cheverton Memorial Scholarship also offers the opportunity to participate in the broader work of the Deeble Institute for Health Policy Institute and the AHHA.

For more information about the Deeble Institute Scholarship program, including the Jeff Cheverton Memorial Scholarships visit <https://bnphn.org/health-scholarship>.





## GUIDELINES FOR TREATING PATIENTS WITH WORK-RELATED MENTAL HEALTH CONDITIONS

Work-related mental health conditions are the second most common cause of workers' compensation, however, these conditions are typically challenging to diagnose and treat. In Australia, most injured workers seek care from their GP.

The *Clinical guideline for the diagnosis and management of work-related mental health conditions in general practice* provides GPs with the best available evidence to guide their diagnosis and management of patients with work-related mental health conditions.

The guideline was approved by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC) in late 2018. It is endorsed by the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) and the Australian College of Rural and Remote Medicine (ACRRM).

To access this guideline visit <https://bnphn.org/MH-guideline>.

Additionally, the *Australian Guidelines for the Treatment of Acute Stress Disorder, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Complex PTSD* aims to support high quality treatment of people with PTSD by providing a framework of best practice around which to structure treatment.

Approved by the National Health and Medical Research Council (NHMRC), the guidelines were developed by Phoenix Australia (formerly Australian Centre for Posttraumatic Mental Health) and a team of Australia's leading trauma experts, in collaboration with psychiatrists, psychologists, general practitioners and other health professionals.

To access the *Australian Guidelines for the Treatment of Acute Stress Disorder, Posttraumatic Stress Disorder and Complex PTSD* visit <https://bnphn.org/aust-guidelines-MH>.

For more information contact Comcare Assistant Director, Angie Deegan on **03 9914 6358**.

### **Specific populations and trauma types in the guidelines include:**

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples and PTSD
- emergency services personnel and PTSD
- military and ex-military personnel and PTSD
- motor vehicle accident and other traumatic injury survivors
- natural disasters and trauma reactions
- PTSD in older people
- refugees, asylum seekers and PTSD
- sexual assault and PTSD
- terrorism and trauma reactions
- victims of crime and PTSD.





**THE TEAM OF DEDICATED EYE SPECIALISTS TREAT A VARIETY OF CONDITIONS INCLUDING:**

- cataract
- corneal disease
- anterior segment disorders
- glaucoma
- ocularplastics
- retinal problems and macular degeneration
- neuro-ophthalmology
- strabismus
- ocular inflammatory disorders.

## Ophthalmology department referral information

The Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH) ophthalmology outpatient services provide general and emergency eye and vision care including specialised surgery and diagnostic procedures.

Referrals provided to the ophthalmology department are often lacking sufficient information regarding a patient's visual acuity or other structural information about the eye that can be provided within an optometrist assessment.

**The Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Ophthalmology Service are now requesting all ophthalmology outpatient referrals include:**

1. a GP referral with the patient's full medical history
2. an optometrist assessment.

*GPs should send patients to their local optometrist with the GP's health summary and reason for referral.*

The optometrist may then send your referral on (with the patient's past medical history) with their assessment directly to the RBWH ophthalmology department.

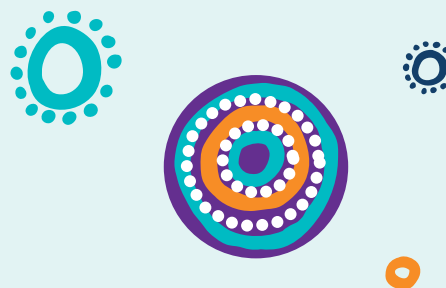
Alternatively, they may return the patient back to you with their assessment so that you can send both your referral and their optometry assessment to RBWH ophthalmology department. Whoever sends the referral will need to include both a GP and optometrist report.

RBWH Ophthalmologists require this information from a prioritisation perspective especially for cataract surgery. If during their preliminary assessment, it is found that visual acuity can be improved then surgery may be postponed, or your patient discharged.

An optometrist assessment can reveal important information including the presence of structural elements that may affect surgery, details of diabetic eye disease, measurement of eye pressure or screening of visual fields.

For further information visit <https://bnphn.org/ophthamology>.

# NEWS in brief



## Getting ready for extreme weather

The Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) defines a heatwave as three or more days of high maximum and minimum temperatures that are unusual for that location.

Heatwaves are identified as the third highest priority natural hazard for the state of Queensland. They are also a contributing factor to bushfires, a deadly hazard which itself causes secondary health hazards associated with poor air and water quality.

The Queensland Government provides information designed to help Queenslanders prepare for a heatwave and other types of extreme weather on the Get Ready Queensland website.

For more information including a suite of resources, tips on preparing an emergency plan, and links to receive emergency weather alerts on your phone visit [www.getready.qld.gov.au](http://www.getready.qld.gov.au).

## Free sign language interpreting services

From November 2020, older Australians who are deaf, deafblind, or hard of hearing, and who do not have access to interpreting services through aged care programs or the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS), can access free sign language interpreting services for daily activities such as:

- family/social events
- banking
- moving/selling house
- dealing with agencies/advisors etc.

These services are available face-to-face and by video remote.

Clients will need to contact Auslan Connections in advance. Once registered you will receive a Department of Health booking code which can be used each time they book an interpreting service. Bookings can be made via the Auslan Connections website or by calling **1300 010 877**.

## healthdirect Video Call free licence extensions

Aligning with the recent extension of MBS-subsidised telehealth items, GPs can continue to use healthdirect Video Call free-of-charge until 31 March 2021 under the Video Call COVID-19 GP Program.

About a quarter of all general practices have now registered to use healthdirect Video Call, with 1,700 actively using the service to safely conduct consultations.

Thanks to the support from PHN digital health managers, GPs in all 31 Primary Health Networks use this safe, secure video consultation platform which was purpose-built for primary health settings.

The extension of the free licence for healthdirect Video Call gives GPs more time to become familiar with telehealth before integrating it into their business-as-usual model of care.

For more information visit <https://about.healthdirect.gov.au/video-call>.

## New edition of paediatric handbook launched

This year, The Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) celebrates its 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. As part of this occasion, the RCH is proud to launch the 10<sup>th</sup> edition of the *RCH Paediatric Handbook*. The Handbook presents collective expertise of the hospital's world leading clinical staff, including practical advice on the assessment and management of common and serious child health conditions.

An essential practical management guide to the health problems of newborn infants, children and adolescents, the Paediatric Handbook is a valuable reference for all medical students, hospital residents and community practitioners.

The *RCH Paediatric Handbook* 10<sup>th</sup> edition can be pre-ordered from 1 December 2020 via [www.shop.rch.org.au](http://www.shop.rch.org.au).



# NOTICEBOARD

## ONLINE DEMENTIA MODULES FOR PRACTICE STAFF

Funded by Brisbane North PHN, Dementia Training Australia are offering a series of online modules for practice nurses, administrative and practice management and practice nurse staff working within general practice. The modules will address the common types and causes of dementia, describe the impact of dementia on a person's daily life, as well as appropriate strategies for communicating effectively with people with dementia.

### Modules include:

1. Dementia Discovery
2. The View from Here for RAC/Community
3. Creating sustainable environments

Staff are able to enrol in courses of interest and complete at their own pace. Each course offers a downloadable certificate of completion.

To sign up for this initiative please contact Dementia Training Australia at [dta@qut.edu.au](mailto:dta@qut.edu.au).

## CONSULTATION EXTENDED: SAFETY AND QUALITY IN HEALTHCARE

The Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care has extended the consultation on the draft National Safety and Quality Primary Healthcare (NSQPH) Standards until Friday 29 January 2021.

This is to ensure those wanting to contribute to the Australia's first nationally consistent safety and quality standards for the primary healthcare sector are able to do so.

Written for services that deliver health care to people in a primary healthcare setting, the draft NSQPH Standards provide a national framework to support safety and quality improvements, with a focus on delivering consumer-centred care.

For more information or to contribute to the consultation visit <https://bnphn.org/nsqph-standards>.

## VACCINE SERVICE PROVIDERS SHOULD PREPARE FOR STORM SEASON

It is important to prepare for the storm season, which usually occurs between October and March each year. Storms are a common cause of power failure which can place your vaccines at risk of temperature fluctuations. Now is the time to check that everything is in place so you can be confident that your vaccines will be as safe as possible during storm season.

For more information refer to the National Vaccine Storage Guidelines 'Strive for 5' 3<sup>rd</sup> edition at <https://bnphn.org/strive-for-five>.

## DIGITAL HEALTH INTERVENTION STUDY

You are invited to participate in a study that aims to explore the perspectives and experiences of primary care professionals (GPs, nurses, and pharmacists) on the implementation of digital health interventions and sleep management.

Primary care professionals can provide valuable information on how digital health interventions can be implemented into their clinical practice to facilitate better health care for patients.

For more information or to participate in the study visit <https://survey.gpsfix.com.au>.

# GP BULLETIN – JANUARY 2021

News from General Practice Liaison Officers at Brisbane North PHN and Metro North Hospital and Health Service. Please provide feedback to the GPLO program [mngplo@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:mngplo@health.qld.gov.au).

## HEALTHPATHWAYS UPDATE

### New pathways

We are working with the MNHHS Community Palliative Care team to develop a suite of palliative symptom control pathways and palliative care emergencies pathways.

We'd love to hear from you about which pathway you'd like to see localised. Please send your feedback by email directly to the team: [administration.integration@brisbanenorthphn.org.au](mailto:administration.integration@brisbanenorthphn.org.au).

### HealthPathways login

Login at: [brisbanenorth.communityhealthpathways.org](http://brisbanenorth.communityhealthpathways.org) or phone 07 3630 7300 for login details.

### GPLO-led education events

We are scheduling events for 2021 based on feedback from local GPs.

To provide suggestions for future events, or to request a practice visit to hear the latest information from your local hospitals and the PHN, please email the GP Liaison Team at [mngplo@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:mngplo@health.qld.gov.au).

### Spread the news

Please encourage any colleagues who may not be receiving the GP bulletin to subscribe at <https://bnphn.org/subscribe>.

## MATERNITY; CHILDREN'S AND ADOLESCENT RESOURCES FOR GPs

Following the successful maternity alignment program and children's and adolescent mental health GP webinars, the slides and other resources are now online for who were unable to attend on the night.

Visit the Metro North HHS GP education resources webpage to access these resources and more: <https://bnphn.org/MNHHS-education-resources>.

Useful resources shared at the mental health session included the Children's Health Queensland service map (<https://bnphn.org/CHQ-catchment>) and the PHN's My Mental Health service map (<https://bnphn.org/MMH-services>).

For more information on mental health services within the region call the PHN mental health service navigators on 1800 752 235 (8.30 am – 4.30 pm, Monday to Friday).

## VIRTUAL EMERGENCY DEPARTMENT SERVICE

Metro North Virtual ED offers alternative pathways that can help avoid your patient waiting in an Emergency Department.

Metro North Hospital and Health Service has developed a Virtual Emergency Department service to provide primary healthcare providers with access to specialist emergency medicine advice, by telephone or video conferencing with one of our senior FACEM's.

Health care professionals can call **1300 VIRTED (1300 847 833)** between 8.00 am and 5.00 pm on weekdays to be connected directly to a senior emergency nurse who will rapidly triage your call.

For more information visit <https://bnphn.org/virtual-ED>.

## CHRONIC WOUND SERVICE DIRECTORY

Metro North HHS medical stream and community service providers have come together to develop a chronic wounds service directory for GPs looking for services, which provide care and treatment of acute and chronic wounds.

This easily accessible directory provides information such as location, opening hours and contact details for both public and private health providers within Brisbane's northern suburbs, including Pine Rivers and Moreton Bay Regional Council area.

To access the directory visit <https://bnphn.org/wounds-directory>.

## OPHTHALMOLOGY DEPARTMENT REFERRAL INFORMATION

The Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital (RBWH) ophthalmology outpatient services provide general and emergency eye and vision care including specialised surgery and diagnostic procedures.

Referrals provided to the ophthalmology department are often lacking sufficient information regarding a patient's visual acuity or other structural information about the eye that can be provided within an optometrist assessment.

Details of the required referral information can be found within the full article on **page 9**.