

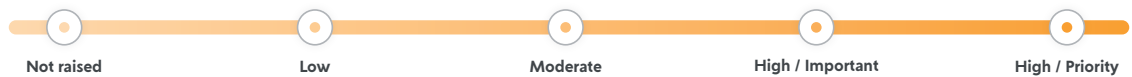
Children’s Health Needs

The 2021/22 – 2023/24 Health Needs Assessment has identified numerous health and service issues in the Brisbane North community that relate to children and young persons. These needs are listed below:

Health Issues	Service Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Developmental vulnerability ✓ First 1000 days 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Perinatal & child Mental Health (MH) (eating disorders) ✓ Service capacity ✓ Coordination & integration ✓ Workforce capability

LEGEND:

Relative rank for prioritised needs:



Health Issues	Overall Prioritisation Rank
Developmental vulnerability	

In 2018, the proportion of children considered developmentally vulnerable were as follows:

- One or more domains: 23.6% (or 2,823 children)
- Two or more domains: 12.3% (or 1,474 children).

Developmental vulnerability in individual domains:

- Physical health and wellbeing: 10.6% (or 1,275 children)
- Social competence 10.9% (or 1,304 children)
- Emotional maturity 10.1% (or 1,214 children)
- Language and cognitive skills 6% (or 717 children)
- Communication skills and general knowledge 8.5% (or 1,025 children).

First 1000 days	
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In Brisbane North there were 11,758 births in 2018. Of these:

- 19.4% (2,217) mothers were obese
- 8.9% (1,031) mothers smoked during pregnancy
- 86.5% (9,905) mothers had eight or more antenatal visits
- 8.9% (1,046) babies were born <37 weeks gestation
- 7.2% (846) babies had a low birth weight
- 25.7% (2,982) mothers were 35+ years old.

Consultation

Children and young persons were identified as a population of concern or interest by practitioners for the following health areas: mental health, behavioural and learning difficulties, weight issues, intellectual disability, alcohol and other drug use.

“We desperately need paediatric allied health clinicians that are free for the community or at least, no out of pocket costs. Developmental assessment and intervention is poorly lacking.” — Community Member

“Team based care. I believe child health nurses should be working in GP practices to build relationships, trust and share knowledge in child development and all areas related to children. I believe a Child and Family Hub model that is co-designed with all respective stakeholders would be beneficial for our area.” — Peak Agency

Service Issues	Overall Prioritisation Rank
Perinatal and child mental health	

Perinatal mental health:

The *Australian National Infant Feeding Survey* estimates 20% of women are likely to experience depression in the perinatal period. Risk factors include: younger mothers, were smokers, came from lower income households, spoke English at home, were overweight or obese, or had an emergency caesarean section.

Children’s mental health:

- In 2018–19 children aged 0 to 14 years accessed GP mental health services at a rate of 6.91 services per 100 people. This is slightly higher than nationally or other metropolitan regions.
- In Brisbane North there were 658 presentations for mental and behavioural disorders to emergency departments by children aged 0 to 14 years in 2018–19. The resulting rate (337.4 presentations per 100,000 people) is higher than the Australian or Queensland rate.
- In 2019–20, there were 597 and 211 hospitalisations for self-harm by females and males aged under 24 years, respectively.

Service capacity	
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Since 2013–14 the use of Medicare-subsidised allied health services by children aged 0 to 4 years in Brisbane North have steadily increased.

- From 40.59 services per 100 people to 56.82 services per 100 people in 2018–19.
- This is a change of 70,795 services to 108,151 services, or an annual average increase of 8.8%.
- Allied health services have increased annually in this period, faster than the rate of GP attendances.

Coordination and integration	
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In 2017–18, long-term conditions most reported in Australian children were asthma (10%), hay fever and allergic rhinitis (10%), anxiety disorders (5.7%), problems of psychological development (5.7%) and food allergy (5.5%).

Attendance rates and percentage of children 0–14 years who accessed the service:

- GP: 440.25 attendances per 100 people, 86.8%
- Specialist: 43.02 attendances per 100 people, 18.95%
- Allied health: 56.82 attendances per 100 people, 22.51%.

Workforce capability	
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There appears to be a decline in the number of practitioners in the region who reportedly specialised or worked in the job area of “paediatrics and child health”:

- Medical practitioners: 106 (2013) to 85 (2018)
- Nurses and midwives: 543 (2013) to 227 (2018).

Consultation

Children and young persons were identified as a population of concern or interest by practitioners for the following health areas: mental health, behavioural and learning difficulties, weight issues, intellectual disability, alcohol and other drug use.

“We desperately need paediatric allied health clinicians that are free for the community or at least, no out of pocket costs. Developmental assessment and intervention is poorly lacking.” — Community Member

“More mental health supports in the community. Support for programs that deliver groups for young people experiencing psychosocial difficulties/ disabilities. More staffing for psychosocial programs so that staff can engage with more young people experiencing mental health concerns. This would allow more mental health workers to engage with more young people to support their mental health goals and recovery dialogue.” — Social Worker

“Team based care. I believe Child Health nurses should be working in GP practices to build relationships, trust and share knowledge in Child development and all areas related to children. I believe a Child and Family Hub model that co-designed with all respective stakeholders would be beneficial for our area. — Market Research