

Our services

Gold Coast Health, similar to health organisations globally, is facing significant challenges in delivering high quality, low cost healthcare with high levels of patient satisfaction.

As identified in *My health, Queensland's future: Advancing health 2026*, our population is aging and there is a growing number of Queenslanders living with chronic disease.

Solutions such as best-practice clinical interventions, new technologies, digital transformation and a resilient, engaged workforce will help us to navigate a healthcare which is changing rapidly.

The health service is divided into five main clinical directorates containing a range of service areas:

- Cancer, Access and Support Services
- Diagnostic, Emergency and Medical Services
- Mental Health and Specialist Services
- Specialty and Procedural Services
- Women, Newborn and Children's Services.

Cancer, Access and Support Services (CASS)

Demand, Access and Management Cancer
Blood and Palliative Care
Public Health
Infectious Diseases and Immunology
Pharmacy
Nutrition and Food Services
Social Work and Support
Speech Pathology

Diagnostic, Emergency and Medical Services (DEMS)

Emergency and Assessment
Transitional Care Services
Diagnostic Services
General Medicine, Aged Care, Vascular, Endocrine
Cardiac, Thoracic, Renal, Respiratory
Neurology Services and Rehabilitation

Specialty and Procedural Services (SaPS)

Perioperative and Critical Care
Head, Neck, Oral and Neurosurgical
Surgical and Musculoskeletal

Mental Health and Specialist Services (MHSS)

Specialist Programs and Alcohol and Other Drugs
Adult and Older Person Mental Health
Child and Youth Mental Health
Community Mental Health
Quality, Safety and Corporate Governance
Business Support Unit

Women, Newborn and Children's Services (WNCS)

Obstetrics and Gynaecology
Midwifery Group Practice
Newborn Care
Paediatrics
Children's Critical Care
Child Youth and Family Health
Child Protection Liaison Unit
Community Child Health
School Based Youth Health Nursing

Wins all around for mental health consumers and staff

Mental Health and Specialist Services (MHSS) continues its commitment to providing safe, sustainable, efficient, quality and responsive services to the Gold Coast community.

The 'Journey to Zero' Suicide Prevention Strategy has been recognised with a highly commended award for 'Delivering Healthcare' at the 2017 Queensland Health Awards for Excellence ceremony. The initiative has achieved remarkable success since its introduction in December 2016 and has helped reduce the incidence of suicide in more than 1200 cases.

In an Australian first, Gold Coast Health have developed a series of consumer videos to provide consumers and their families and carers with an understanding of Electroconvulsive Therapy (ECT) and to further reduce the stigma surrounding this treatment. The videos feature consumers sharing their experiences so that others are aware of what to expect when they are preparing to undergo this treatment. The innovative idea won the People's Choice Award at the 2017 Improvers Event.

Engaging consumers is a vital driver of success in the delivery of quality mental health services. Gold Coast Health continues its strong record of engagement through the annual ArtBeat music and art festival, when consumers take to the stage at GCUH to perform and showcase more than 120 artworks created by consumers in the hospital foyer. This year also saw the publishing of the inaugural ArtBeat book, which is a collection of creative pieces including artworks, songs, poems, ArtBeat Festival photos and stories by mental health consumers. All proceeds from the sale of the book will be returned to developing and continuing creative programs for mental health consumers, in particular the ArtBeat festival and Art Gala events.

Gold Coast Health also hosted a NAIDOC event which was well-attended by staff, the community and patients, and the first Courageous Conversations About Race 'Beyond Diversity' Workshop was held. Gold Coast Health has committed to supporting the roll out of this valuable training which is envisaged will ensure that health service planning and delivery is aligned to the culturally diverse population that we serve.



Growth in emergency care

Statistics show GCUH has the busiest Emergency Department (ED) in Australia.

In this financial year there were 109,466 presentations to the ED at GCUH and 61,693 presentations to ED at Robina Hospital.

Overall Gold Coast Health received a record 171,159 presentations.

The 4.34 per cent increase in emergency patients, which equates to an average of 135 patients a week across both hospitals.

Gold Coast Health recorded a National Emergency Access Target (NEAT) of 76 per cent, meaning almost three quarters of the people presenting had completed their total care in ED within four hours of arrival.

Tackling demand for children's health services

Increased demand for clinical services and sustained growth in population is driving a redesign of Children's Services at Gold Coast Health. The project will be the first of its kind in Queensland in terms of service size and scope.

Demand for Children's Services has intensified since the opening of Gold Coast University Hospital in September 2013, with a 36 per cent increase in episodes of care.

This local growth in the population, combined with demand for services from northern NSW and Queensland children residing outside the Gold Coast catchment, means there is a consistent year-on-year increased demand across Children's Services.

Patient complexity across all service levels is also rising, with many Gold Coast children growing up within households and communities alongside intergenerational parental and family drug and alcohol misuse, mental health issues, and domestic and family violence.

The project will build on the existing clinical excellence across Children's Services to deliver a whole of service reform. Children's Services will be responsive to current and evolving community expectations and health care needs of Gold Coast children and their families.

Engaging frontline staff and consumers to successfully redesign and improve service delivery across all aspects of the child's journey will be central within the project's approach.

As a major provider of health services for children, Gold Coast Health is committed to ensuring all children have safe and timely access to a world-class, high quality health service.



Dr Vanita Math and Midwifery Navigator Diane Tamariki hosting a telehealth appointment with Samantha Willums and baby Cohl Beevis.

Women's health made easier with telehealth

Gold Coast Health's Midwifery and Obstetric team have implemented specialist telehealth gynaecology and obstetric consultations which are making life easier for women.

The convenient skype-like appointment by video increases access to women's health services for eligible women, reduces travel to the hospital, parking costs and the inconvenience of a face to face appointment.

Midwifery Navigator Diane Tamariki, together with Specialist Obstetrician and Gynaecologist Dr Vanitha Math, have so far delivered more than 20 consultations via telehealth since the project was introduced in October 2017.

The virtual consultations allow for multiple specialists to join at one time, and both medical staff and the patient can see their records during the video link, which is delivered using a secure Queensland Health connection.

“This is a truly innovative way of providing genuine care that I have not seen in any other discipline or health service unit, and I'd encourage other maternity services and hospitals to adopt it. I had access to my midwife through text and phone communication, 24 hours per day, seven days per week and the majority of the time in consultations was spent focusing on my feelings, expectations and preferences, with all the testing and scanning done at the end of our time together.”

– Lauren Ball, commenting on the Midwifery Group Practice

Continuity of care for new families at GCUH

Demand for the health service’s full range of antenatal, birth, postnatal and neonatal care for women and their families has been growing on the Gold Coast.

There has been a significant increase in women choosing to give birth at Gold Coast University Hospital due to its modern and attractive birthing suites, skilled staff and exceptional level of care.

Gold Coast Health provides a comprehensive and supportive birthing service to Gold Coast families, which includes fetal medicine services, a Newborn Care Unit, a Neonatal Intensive Care Unit for specialist care post-delivery and services to support children right through their development.

More women are opting for a continuity of care model through midwifery group practice and private practice midwives, with 742 births through the model this year, up from 676 in the previous year. There is also increasing interest in water births, with water birth numbers increasing to 550, up 100 more than last year.

Our midwifery home visiting service provided 7300 home visiting episodes of midwifery care to mothers and their babies.

Also on the increase is multiple births, with 80 sets of twins and two sets of triplets born at GCUH this financial year.

Table 2: Births at GCUH

Reporting year	Babies born
2011/12	3551
2012/13	3787
2013/14	4375
2014/15	4744
2015/16	4943
2016/17	5129
2017–18	5165



GCH Midwife Navigators, Diane Tamariki, Bethan Townsend and Bee Schaeche work with vulnerable pregnant women on the Gold Coast.

Vulnerable women to receive specialised midwifery care

A Gold Coast Health team of experienced midwives are the first in Queensland’s public health system to specialise in supporting expectant mothers with substance abuse and mental health issues, and the demand for the service is clear with 40 referrals received on their first day of operation.

Three experienced midwives lead the Midwifery Navigator service to coordinate care between the mother, her primary carer, specialists and health professionals prior to, during birth, and for up to six weeks after birth.

The Midwife Navigators help vulnerable pregnant women at the Gold Coast who are often not engaged with the health system. They co-ordinate appointments and escalate their care when necessary, leading to an improvement in perinatal outcomes for women, their babies and families.

Midwife Navigators will be involved with the care of local mums intensively through pregnancy and for up to six weeks after birth. The Midwifery Navigators will endeavour to follow up with clients at three, six and 12 months after birth.

The Midwifery Navigators will add to the Nurse Navigators program to have 50 employed across the broader health service in the coming years.

The Navigator role is a joint initiative of the Office of the Chief Nursing and Midwifery Officer and Gold Coast Health.

Yanbalelha Karulbo in Closing the Gap for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples

(Yanbalelha Karulbo means 'Working Together' in Yugambeh Language)

Gold Coast Health is dedicated to closing the gap and improving health outcomes for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples on the Gold Coast by collaborating with the community to develop and implement culturally appropriate and innovative programs, models of care and services.

During the 2017-18 period the Gold Coast Health has made significant achievements including:

- a key measure added to the Gold Coast Health strategic plan for Aboriginal peoples' and Torres Strait Islander peoples' Health
- continuation of the Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples Health e-learning component of the Yanbalelha Karulbo Cultural Practice Program with 2218 staff completing the full program since its inception in March 2017
- mapping completed to build an evaluation tool for the Cultural Practice Program to gauge the level of cultural capability in collaboration with Griffith University with capacity to validate the tool in the future
- introduction session to the First 1000 Days Australia program held with Dr Kerry Arabena
- culturally safe spaces with the introduction of artwork on the Birthing Suite Walls, Community Garden Poles, Chaplaincy, transfer unit and development of wall wraps for the Emergency department, Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs
- agreement to develop a culturally specific nursing scrub for ED and other areas
- development of a Gold Coast Health Reconciliation Action Plan underway
- determining strategies to improve upon the issues identified in both the Stolen Wages Reparation Taskforce Report and the report on Addressing Institutional Barriers to Health Equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People in Queensland's Public Hospital and Health Services
- introduction and subsequent roll out of the Courageous Conversations About Race program.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Hospital liaison service had 2873 occasions of service with a number of these services relating to complex patient care. Overall Gold Coast Health had 4279 patients discharge during the period and 14,886 outpatient appointments where the patient was identified as an Aboriginal person or Torres Strait Islander person.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health workers are instrumental in leading and assisting in the delivery of holistic culturally appropriate multidisciplinary programs

for patients experiencing chronic disease, mental health, AODS, antenatal and nutrition issues.

Potentially Preventable Hospitalisations (PPH) for the Gold Coast (based on March 2018 quarterly data) continue to have the lowest rates amongst all Queensland Hospital and Health Services (8.6 per cent as at March quarter data) and almost half the state average (16.4 per cent).

Maternal and Child Health Workers facilitated an Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples Health Antenatal program in January 2018 to promote antenatal visits, access to the Gold Coast University Hospital, and to promote good health and wellbeing during this important time for families.

Our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce is integral to the delivery of culturally appropriate care and will be supported by the development of an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Workforce Strategy in 2018-19 in line with the statewide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workforce Strategic Framework.

Community engagement has been supported by the Karulbo Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Partnership in bringing community members together to discuss health challenges and strengths based approaches. Gold Coast Health works in close partnership with services for Aboriginal peoples and Torres Strait Islander peoples, including Kalwun Health Service, Mibbinbah, Krurungal, Yallbarru and other services to support this work and is developing a sub-group of the Community Advisory Group specifically focused on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health.



This original artwork was produced for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Service by Gene Slockee using artwork and elements inspired by our local community members depicting Social and Emotional wellbeing. The artwork is the central piece used in promoting the Yanbalelha Karulbo program branding and assisting in building cultural capability across Gold Coast Health.

Research growth continues

Research is a key part of Gold Coast Health's vision of delivering a world-class health service, one where high-quality research is systematically translated into patient care.

The past year has seen a period of growth in research capability as a result of our efforts to entrench a research culture and consolidate our research architecture.

The Gold Coast region is in a state of rapid expansion, and is forming an identity as a research and technical innovation hub. The pivotal role of research in the health sector has never been more evident than in the past 12 months.

The legacy of the Commonwealth Games places the Gold Coast in a unique position, particularly the development of the Health and Knowledge Precinct on the site of the Athletes Village. The Precinct has already attracted attention across government and the global business community, due to its unique placement of a university, a private hospital and a public tertiary hospital, alongside options for high-tech industry development. As the Precinct is further established, Australia's brightest minds and those from further afield will be able to come together to find solutions for tomorrow's health challenges.

The role of research as a core part of service delivery is reflected in the formation of several new research collaboratives this year, as well as significant growth in established collaboratives. Several new conjoint appointments were also established with Griffith University and Bond University to support clinicians in their research activity, particularly in the fields of Emergency Medicine and Mental Health.

Research is in its essence a collaborative activity, and there are many examples of how we combine our partners' complementary strengths to drive patient-focused research. Our clinicians are already reaping the benefits of this close partnership with Griffith University and strong collaborations with Bond University, Southern Cross University and an array of academic partners.

Our goal is to become a major innovative research organisation in outer urban and regional health and we are working to capitalise on the programs already underway in areas as diverse as trauma, nutrition and mental health.

As a healthcare institution, our research maintains a unique and dedicated focus to directly improving care and supporting our patients' quality of life. This can be achieved by working alongside our partners in academia, industry, health, and community services to deliver collective solutions.

A significant point in our development as a research-focused institution was the launch of our Research Strategy and Roadmap (2018–2022). Defining our priorities on the journey to a research-focused organisation will ensure we have a strong foundation for the future. Detailed information on research activity at Gold Coast Health can be found in the 2017 Research Report which is available by visiting www.goldcoast.health.qld.gov.au/about-us/publications.

 **\$2.9 million**
in research grants

 **159** research projects authorised

 **244** active researchers

 **1460+**
patients recruited to active trials

 **76** national and international partnerships

We're ready for the NDIS

Gold Coast Health has prepared for the roll out of the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) across the Gold Coast area from 1 July 2018.

The NDIS provides Australians, under the age of 65, who have an impairment or condition that is likely to be permanent (life-long) and significant disability with the reasonable and necessary supports they need to live an ordinary life. This may include personal care and support, access to the community, therapy services and essential equipment.

The Gold Coast Health team has been planning for the introduction of the NDIS since 2016 and is working in collaboration with key stakeholders and the National Disability Insurance Agency (NDIA), the federal agency responsible for overseeing implementation in the region.