

Annual Report 2024

People at the Heart



Proudly representing

BlueCare | Lifeline | ARRCs | The Wesley Hospital | Buderim Private Hospital
St Stephen's Hospital | St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital



Acknowledgement of Country

UnitingCare acknowledges the sovereignty of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, as the First Peoples and Custodians of the lands, waters, seas and skies of this country.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present for their continued care for Country, traditional knowledge keeping, storytelling, bravery and welcoming. We commit to living out the spirit held within the Uluru Statement from the Heart; in lifting the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, supporting truth telling and walking together as First and Second peoples on the path to Treaty.

We are grateful for the unique and valued contributions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, volunteers, associates and partners make to inform the quality of care we provide and for the many reconciliation allies we have within our organisation.

We will work purposefully for the continued strengthening of emerging Elders and cultural leaders within the communities we serve.

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Who we are

UnitingCare Queensland, an outreach of the Uniting Church Queensland Synod, has the great privilege of delivering health, aged care, disability, and community services to thousands of people in need every day throughout Queensland, and in the Northern Territory through Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS).

We are continuing the legacy of community services run by the Presbyterian, Methodist and Congregational churches, which united in 1977 around their shared mission. Our purpose remains to offer UnitingCare services to people who need our care and support, so that they may live life in all its fullness.

Our services

Every day UnitingCare strives to provide the care and services people need to live life in all its fullness.

BlueCare

- In home and community aged care services, including:
 - Generalist and specialist nursing
 - Dementia care
 - Allied health services
 - In-Home care packages
 - Personal care, social support and domestic assistance to people in their own homes
- Residential aged care services
- Respite care
- Retirement living
- Advisory service

ARRCS (Australian Regional and Remote Community Services)

- Allied Health services
- Day therapy centres
- Dementia Care
- Advisory service
- Domestic assistance
- In-Home care packages
- Personal care
- Residential aged care
- Respite care
- Child Care Centre and school nutrition

Now, as one of Australia's largest charities, we remain grounded in the beliefs of our founders – that everyone deserves the chance to live their best possible life. This inspires us every day to change people's lives for the better, through more than 460 locations including hospitals, residential aged care facilities, retirement living and family and disability services.

UnitingCare proudly operates BlueCare, UnitingCare, ARRCS, Lifeline in Queensland, The Wesley Hospital, Buderim Private Hospital, St Stephen's Hospital and St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital.

UnitingCare Family and Disability Services

- Community recovery (including Farmer to Lifeline Farmer)
- Lifeline Crisis support (including 13YARN)
- Lifeline retail (shops and online)
- Counselling (for children, families, couples, and dispute resolution)
- Financial resilience and wellbeing
- Family protection including men's behavioural change programs
- Out of Home Care Services (foster and kinship care, and residential care)
- Homelessness, domestic and family violence support
- Elder Abuse Prevention Unit
- Early Childhood Approach Program
- NDIS Supported Independent Living community, social and economic participation
- Disability Employment Services including Project Search

UnitingCare Hospitals

- The Wesley Hospital
- St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital
- St Stephen's Hospital – Hervey Bay
- Buderim Private Hospital

Mission

As an outreach of the Uniting Church, our mission is to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, and communities in need. We speak out for fairness and justice; and care with compassion, innovation, and wisdom.

‘Life in all its fullness’

John 10:10, The Holy Bible,
Good News Translation

Values

Our values are core to how we deliver our services and are informed by over 100 years of service delivery inspired by the mission of Christ.



Compassion

Demonstrating understanding and empathy for others, to bring holistic care, hope and inspiration.



Leading Through Learning

Encouraging innovation and supporting learning.



Respect

Accepting and honouring diversity, uniqueness, and the contribution of others.



Justice

Focusing on the needs of people we serve and to work for a fair, just and sustainable society.



Working Together

Appreciating the richness of individual contributions, partnerships, and teamwork.

About this report

We are dedicated to helping people live life in all its fullness by offering accessible aged care, health, retirement, community and family and disability services.

This year’s Annual Report shines a light on the strategies, service models, processes, operational changes, and technology we have implemented so that we can continue to put **people at the heart** - the theme of our report this year. As an organisation, we want to be in the best possible position to meet the evolving needs of the people we serve now, and well into the future.

Rolling out BlueCare’s ground-breaking Neighbourhood community model state-wide, changing the face of residential aged care with the opening of Sunrise Beach, expanding the robotic surgical offering at our hospitals to enhance patient outcomes, and extending our homelessness and disaster support services are a handful of ways we developed our services to meet future care needs, while remaining responsive to current needs and external challenges.

Our staff and volunteers are integral to shaping our future. We are committed to investing in our people and enhancing their experience. Some of the ways we have done this include upgrading our learning and development platform, launching award-winning diversity and inclusion training, and embedding an evidence-based wellbeing framework within the organisation.

Inside this report you will find more detailed insights about our operating environment, our strategic goals, and how we have performed against our aims and objectives during FY2023-24.

This report is written for our broad community of stakeholders: clients, residents, patients, NDIS participants, their families and supporters, federal and state government partners, our local communities and partners, including visiting medical practitioners, and our people.

Now, and for many years to come, we want to keep inspiring positive change and drive innovation in the sectors we operate in, while delivering compassionate care and exceptional services to those who need it most.

Numbers at the heart



UnitingCare Queensland

16,848*

employees across aged care and community services, hospitals, family and disability services, retirement living and support services

8,769

volunteers contributed a total of...

898,754

hours during FY2023-24

*including our contingent/contractor workforce



Aged Care and Community Services (ACCS)

We have...

5,934

residents living in...

46

residential aged care homes

54,876

community clients supported by...

103

Neighbourhoods delivering localised, tailor-made, in-home and community care services

3,076,222

visits were made to...

54,876

community clients using...

1,608

vehicles



Future proofing the environment

6.5%

We achieved a further 6.5% reduction in our measured carbon footprint - a 16.4% decrease since 2019.



Family and Disability Services (FaDS)

368,195

services provided to families and individuals

2,111

people living with a disability received personal support (including QCSS clients)

8,287

children with disabilities and their families received our Early Childhood Approach services

163,982

contacts were made to the Lifeline Crisis Support lines...

5,709

of those were to 13YARN

4,749

Farmer to Lifeline Farmer calls were received, and...

582

property visits were made to support farmers



Hospitals

In total our hospitals had...

147,394

admissions

53,575

emergency department presentations

89,791

procedures

361,947

bed days



Giving our customers a voice

Our Voice of Customer program helps us stay connected and in tune with the needs of the people and communities we serve. This year we engaged with over

50,000

people, an increase of 25% on last year.

Message from the Chair and CEO

This Annual Report demonstrates our integral role and success in furthering the mission of the Uniting Church in Queensland and keeping people at the heart of everything we do.

During the year, we saw significant changes in our operating environment. The final report of the Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with a Disability was delivered as well as the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) review. The announcement of a new Aged Care Act heralds significant reforms in aged care, in addition to a number of existing reform activities following the recommendations of the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety.

With the rising cost of living, a lack of affordable rentals and homes, and natural disasters creating hardship across Queensland, our services were a source of help and hope for so many.

This Annual Report highlights the progress, facilitated by our exceptional workforce, in helping people who need it most.

People at the heart of our planning

We progressed our 2030 strategy this year, taking the time to explore current and future challenges as part of our annual business planning. This resulted in a review and refresh of our 2030 Vision: to become Australia's most trusted health and community services provider, and the introduction of four strategic pillars which underpin everything we do. Read more in Our Strategy P17-19.

As part of our strategy, we worked towards a planned transition to an incorporated structure, with UnitingCare Queensland Limited commencing operation on 1 July 2024. This change in legal entity simplifies our legal structure as well as our arrangements with regulatory and funding bodies and business partners, with no change to the services we deliver or the people and brands that deliver them.

People at the heart of our services

To meet the growing needs of older Australians, we rolled out our new, person-centred, operating model for in-home and community care services, with 103 BlueCare Neighbourhoods now operating throughout Queensland.

Sunrise Beach on the Sunshine Coast was launched in May, providing thoughtful and exceptionally designed residential aged care accommodation and care based on a smaller household model.

With more people than ever needing help, we secured additional funding and supported a further 2,000 people experiencing homelessness across the state, as well as extending our Domestic and Family Violence, Gambling Help, Out of Home Care, Financial Counselling, Family Support and Men Sustaining Change programs.

Our hospitals continued to provide life saving and life changing medical services, while maintaining the superior standards of care and innovation they are renowned for.

People at the heart of our future

We significantly strengthened our technology backbone to future-proof, streamline and boost the efficiency of our operations so that we can better serve our clients, patients and residents. This included updated human resources systems, new risk management and policy platforms alongside improved technology within our aged care services and electronic file management in our hospitals.

During the year, we restructured areas of our organisation to be in the best position to meet the current and future needs of the people we serve.

We are proud of our progress on our Reconciliation journey to deepen our relationship with First Nations peoples. We supported the Yes vote in the landmark opportunity offered with the Voice to Parliament referendum. Our commitment to strengthening and elevating Reconciliation remains steadfast in the face of the outcome. This report shares some of the work we have been doing to support the empowerment of First Nations peoples as employees and within our community – elevating their voices, needs, and expertise.

UnitingCare is committed to ensuring people are safe and protected from risk of abuse, harm, exploitation, or neglect. We are dedicated to embedding best practice processes and responses, and, in line with this, recently appointed a Safeguarding Lead. This role will deliver on many key safeguarding initiatives, enabling us to keep improving our services, and our physical and digital spaces, so they remain safe and welcoming for everyone.

People at the heart of our leadership

After four and a half years in the role, we farewelled Hospitals Group Executive Michael Krieg. We also said goodbye to Governance Group Executive Sue McKean after 21 years with our organisation. We thank them both for their leadership and loyalty.

In welcoming Rev Bruce Moore as Moderator of the Queensland Synod and member of the UnitingCare Board, we also farewelled him from his former role as UnitingCare Director of Mission after seven years. Bruce's leadership, counsel and spiritual guidance led UnitingCare through COVID and numerous challenges. UnitingCare's strong relationships with the church and congregations was strengthened under his stewardship. We are grateful for his service and continued connection to this work.

We welcomed four new executive team leaders: Hospitals Group Executive David Harper, Governance Group Executive Suzanne Marlow, People and Culture Group Executive Shannon

Richards, and Director of Mission, Rev Dr Peter Armstrong. Each brings a wealth of experience and knowledge that ensures we can continue building a brighter future for the people in our care.

This is Nigel's final annual report after serving as our Board Chair for six years. We thank him for his dedication, and for providing invaluable guidance, expertise and strong governance leadership as our organisation grew and dealt with many external challenges. Rev Andrew Gunton (Moderator) and Rev Heather den Houting (General Secretary) retired from the board this year, and we thank them for their service and expertise.

We are pleased to announce the appointment of Jim Demack, who commenced as the new Board Chair from 1 July 2024. Jim has been a member of the UnitingCare Queensland Board since September 2021 and brings extensive experience in law and governance.

On behalf of the UnitingCare Queensland Board and the Executive Leadership team, we would like to thank staff and volunteers for the compassion, kindness, courage and care they show every day, whether it is on the frontline delivering our services or working behind the scenes. This dedication to care and service is exemplified in our annual Full Circle and Reconciliation Awards.

We are grateful to the Board and Executive Leadership team who continued to lead with strength, clear direction, and purpose, whatever the challenge.

Our heartfelt thanks go to our supporters and collaborators across government, business, plus those in the wider community. Your support meant we could continue to help the thousands of people in need of our services.



Nigel Alexander
Chair of Board
UnitingCare Queensland



Craig Barke
Chief Executive Officer
UnitingCare Queensland

Reflection from the Director of Mission

UnitingCare always has - and always will - put the people we serve at the heart of everything we do. And, as Director of Mission, it is my privilege to reflect on the past year and share the profound ways in which this guiding principle has shaped our journey, and the impact it has on the communities we serve.

From our frontline workers providing compassionate care throughout Queensland and the Northern Territory, to our strategic initiatives designed to address complex social issues, every action we take is rooted in our belief in the inherent worth and dignity of every individual, with a steadfast focus on supporting those who are most vulnerable.

Our services have reached hundreds of thousands of individuals and families, offering not just assistance, but also hope and empowerment. Such as the Miranda Downs station in the Gulf of Carpentaria, where our Remote Area Family Services set up a playgroup for a remote community of 300 people. And the Blair Athol crisis accommodation for homeless men which offers a life skills program, enabling clients to socialise and engage in activities in the community to enhance their mental health and wellbeing. Plus, the CareerTrackers program in our hospitals which helps young people to gain valuable experience for a professional future in healthcare.

Since the Uniting Church's commencement in 1977, and our shared Covenant with the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress in 1994, our commitment to reconciliation and social justice remains unwavering. In 2024, we strengthened our partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, working collaboratively to be culturally responsible, committed to social justice, and to create opportunities for meaningful change. Our Reconciliation Action Plan outlines clear steps towards affirming and encouraging greater appreciation of culture, unity in practice and justice represented through social actions.

As we reflect on FY2023-24, our work is far from complete. The challenges we face are significant, but so too is our resolve. We will continue to innovate, to listen to the voices of those we serve, and to adapt our services to meet their evolving needs. Our vision for the future is one in which every person, regardless of their circumstances, can lead a "life in all its fullness" (John 10:10).

I extend my deepest gratitude to our staff, volunteers, partners, donors, and supporters. Your unwavering belief in our mission fuels our work and amplifies our impact. Together, we are building a more compassionate and just society, with people truly at its heart.

Let us continue to walk together, with hope and determination, towards a better, more compassionate, and inclusive future.



Blessings,

Rev Dr Peter Armstrong
Director of Mission
UnitingCare Queensland



Our story

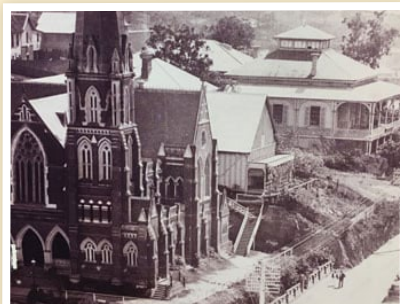


1900 to 1929

Community outreach through the Methodist, Presbyterian and Congregational churches in Queensland began at the end of World War I

1907

Wesley Mission Brisbane was established



1948

St Stephen's Presbyterian Church purchased a local hospital in Maryborough, later named St Stephen's Hospital

1949

The Methodist Church purchased St Helen's Hospital, South Brisbane (later to become The Wesley Hospital in Auchenflower)



1958

The Presbyterian Church opens St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital



1953

The Blue Nursing Service begins with the first Blue Nurse – Sister Olive Crombie – offering free in-home nursing assistance in Brisbane, alongside pastoral care from visiting ministers. This was an initiative of West End Methodist Mission led by Rev Arthur Preston

1964

The first Lifeline centre was opened in Brisbane by Rev Ivan Alcorn, Director of the Methodist Church Department of Young People



Early 1970s

Rev Ed Smith established the first Crossroads in Queensland providing regular camps, holidays, socials and Sunday School classes for people with a disability

Mid 1970s

- The Clare Homes program was established to provide emergency accommodation for homeless families
- Women's shelters were established, including Kalparrin – started by Mr Jim McConnachie
- Blue Nursing's first independent living units opened at Girraween and Yoorana Place

1977

- The Wesley Hospital opened
- On 22 June 1977, the Uniting Church in Australia (UCA) was formally established, bringing together the Methodist Church of Australasia, The Presbyterian Church of Australia, and the Congregational Union of Australia under the Basis of Union



Early to mid 1980s

- The Uniting Church's Queensland Synod approved the formation of the Department for Community Services, led by Mr Bruce Alcorn, in 1981.
- In 1985 the Uniting Aboriginal and Islander Christian Congress was formed, serving as the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander arm of the Uniting Church

1999

- The Uniting Church Assembly Standing Committee approved the name UnitingCare Australia for the national body
- The church renamed its community services arm - Blue Care, UnitingCare Community and UnitingCare Health - and established UnitingCare Queensland, resulting in a single point of accountability: the UnitingCare Queensland board

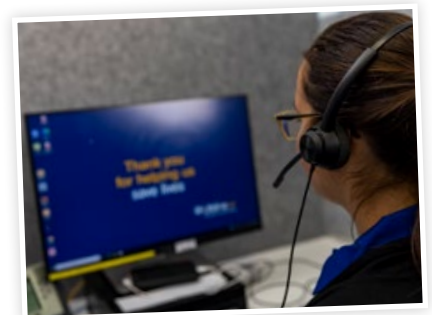
2000

- Lifeline Community Care Queensland is formed bringing together many individual organisations into one, with 12 regional Lifeline divisions across the state
- The Centre for Social Justice is established with found Director Rev Noel Preston, son of Rev Arthur Preston



2011

Lifeline Community Care Queensland became UnitingCare Community, delivering Lifeline and other services



2009

Uniting Church Australia acknowledged Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in its constitution



2012

Launched UnitingCare Queensland's First Reconciliation Action Plan

2014

- Opened St Stephen's Hospital in Hervey Bay – Australia's first integrated digital hospital
- Created UnitingCare Queensland's fourth service group – Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS)



2024

Began transitioning services to an incorporated operating structure - UnitingCare Queensland Limited

Our operating environment



UnitingCare operates within a dynamic environment, which has experienced significant economic, regulatory and workforce changes. This year, we implemented new ways of operating, new technologies, recruitment, and other key strategies to meet the transformation and evolving challenges our sectors are facing.

First Nations people at the heart

Australia held the landmark referendum for a Voice to Parliament in October 2023 - an opportunity to elevate the voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our political discourse. UnitingCare supported a Yes vote for the referendum.

The Uniting Church in Australia in conjunction with the Uniting First Peoples Network delivered the *Uniting for the Voice* campaign in the lead up to the vote. UnitingCare provided staff with access to information, hosted important conversations, empowered our First Nations workforce to share their experiences if they were willing to, and released statements publicly, with a focus on cultural safety for all UnitingCare's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.

We remain deeply committed to walking and working alongside First Nations peoples and communities to make a positive difference. During the year, our teams worked with the Department of Treaty, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Partnerships, Communities and the Arts to transition some of our First Nation carers and young people to Aboriginal-controlled organisations to enable and support self-determination. More information about walking with First Nations peoples is in the Reconciliation section of this report.

Cost of living crisis

Australians faced another year of rising costs of living coupled with housing affordability and availability challenges.

The Queensland Council of Social Services (QCOSS) 2023 Living Affordability in Queensland report identifies housing costs as the highest expenditure for each household, with up to 40% of weekly expenditure being allocated to housing. Across the state, there were also many households who were further impacted by natural disasters.

The Federal Government released a budget forecast for this financial year aimed at easing the cost-of-living pressures, building more homes for Australians, strengthening Medicare and the care economy, and investing in a future made in Australia and the skills and universities needed to make it a reality.

Within UnitingCare, we saw an increase in demand across all our services, in particular for Lifeline, financial, domestic and family violence services, and homelessness support. Additional State and Federal funding top up payments were made across the financial year, supporting our response to

address, in part, the increase in demand. Advocacy and the development and delivery of innovative service models to address unmet need further enhanced our ability to respond to the rising demand levels.

We continue to be impacted by the rising costs of doing business across the organisation. Our experienced team planned for increases and put safeguards in place to ensure we continued delivering services that make a difference to vulnerable people across the state in this cost environment.

Workforce and skills shortages

Frontline workers across the Health, Aged Care and Community Services sectors worked tirelessly through the pandemic, often amassing significant leave balances.

Workers taking this well-earned leave - combined with the national skills shortage - placed additional pressure on demand for labour across aged care, hospital and disability services, which particularly impacted the workforce in regional and remote areas. In addressing these workforce challenges we focused on recruitment and retention activities outlined in this report.

Evolving disability services

We have seen significant focus on disability services within our operating environment.

The Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with a Disability released its final report during the year. This report made 222 recommendations on how to improve laws, policies, structures, and practises to ensure a more inclusive and just society that supports the independence of people with disability and their right to live free from violence, abuse, neglect, and exploitation. UnitingCare Queensland provided significant input through submissions and was called to present during the Hearing 32 held in Brisbane. The focus of the hearing was to draw on the expertise of best practice providers such as UnitingCare in several areas: supported decision making, choice and control, and staff training and development.

The National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS) review delivered the *Working together to deliver the NDIS* report that outlines 26 recommendations with 139 actions to change the system that supports people with disabilities. The goal of the recommendations is to provide a blueprint to renew the promise of the NDIS and deliver a more accessible and inclusive Australia.

While National Cabinet agreed to implement legislative changes, the Australian Government is carefully considering the recommendations in both final reports before providing its response in the new financial year. We welcome the reports, recommendations, and actions, and will work closely with our government and disability partners to ensure the timely rollout of reforms.

Out of Home Care

During the year we saw significant changes to the out of home care environment and system. The Queensland Government stepped in to provide cover for key insurance categories that insurance companies had withdrawn. Without this insurance coverage, out of home care organisations would be unable to operate and continue to deliver these services to vulnerable children and young people.

Another key change we saw this year was large out of home care service providers leaving the industry. UnitingCare remains committed to providing vital residential and foster and kinship care services to support children, young people and their carers.

In February, *A Roadmap for Residential Care in Queensland* (the Roadmap) was released by the Honourable Charis Mullen MP, Minister for Child Safety, Minister for Seniors and Disability Services and Minister for Multicultural Affairs. This Roadmap was developed with the findings of the review of the Queensland residential care system in 2023 and is a five-year plan that has been designed in partnership with the sector to reshape the residential care sector for the better. The Department will work in partnership with child protection peaks and other stakeholders, to implement and deliver on the Roadmap's 31 key actions. We have begun working with the Department on the rollout of these changes.

There is increasing complexity in managing high risk, out of home care residentials - which often house young people having reactive trauma responses - whilst providing a safe workplace including psychosocial health and safety for staff.

Aged Care Reform

This year, the Federal Government released the Exposure Draft of a new Aged Care Act. Work on the act follows the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety findings that highlighted the current Aged Care Act is no longer fit for purpose. The new rights-based Act will put older people who need aged care at the centre of the system and will underpin responses to around 50 Royal Commission recommendations.

Other aged care reforms implemented this year have included:

- A new requirement for all residential aged care services to have a registered nurse on site 24 hours a day seven days a week.
- Mandated care minutes in residential aged care: 200 care minutes with 40 registered nursing minutes per day.
- New annual operations reporting to enable publication of additional information about provider operations and finances on the My Aged Care website.
- Implementation of new requirements for governing body membership and provider advisory bodies.

BlueCare's new Neighbourhood operating model for community services is an industry-leading step towards the goals of the new Act and the broader aged care reform program.

The Aged Care Taskforce

To address the long-term sustainability of aged care service delivery in Australia, the Minister for Aged Care established the Aged Care Taskforce in 2023. Building on the Royal Commission into Aged Care Quality and Safety's recommendations, the Taskforce provided expert advice on funding arrangements including developing options for a system that aims to be fair and equitable for everyone in Australia.

The Taskforce provided a final report to Government with options and a recommended package in December 2023. The recommendations include a framework for Government funding to continue for aged care, alongside a means tested co-contribution scheme for consumers, with a strong safety net. The potential increase in personal financial contributions being made by consumers towards their aged care requires a high degree of consideration by relevant stakeholders, which has impacted the timing of the new Aged Care Act.

Fair Work Commission Work Value Case

This financial year we implemented the interim 15% increase in wages for certain roles working in the aged care sector including:

- Nursing Assistants, Enrolled Nurses, Nurse Practitioners and Registered Nurses working in aged care facilities and in the community.
- Personal Carers and Allied Health Assistants working in aged care facilities and in the community.
- Activities Officers, Diversional Therapists, Leisure and Lifestyle Team Leaders and Co-ordinators working in aged care facilities.
- The most senior food services employees working at aged care facilities.

The Fair Work Commission has now handed down its final decision for further wage increases under the Work Value Case. The Federal Government has committed to funding these increases, which will be implemented in the 2024-25 and 2025-26 financial years.

Our strategy



UnitingCare Queensland's 2030 vision is to be Australia's most trusted health and community services provider, while continuing to put the people we serve at the heart of everything we do.

Working towards an even brighter future

To bring this vision to life our business planning has been focussed around three goals:

1. Aged Care and Community

Our Goal: Leading the way with high-quality, innovative, person-centred aged care services in the home, and organic growth of nursing, allied health and niche services in the community.

We achieved this by:

- Designing / implementing a service delivery model for superior client outcomes
- Implementing technology that enables us to deliver care in the community at scale
- Becoming an industry employer of choice for aged care staff

2. Family and Disability Services

Our Goal: Expanding our social impact by extending our service offerings and continuing to deliver high quality person-centred, culturally inclusive, and place-based services. We achieved this by:

- Crisis and wellbeing response helping those facing crisis/hardship
- Protecting children and young people and supporting them towards future goals
- Parenting and family wellbeing, giving parents skills to keep children safe in the home
- Delivering disability services that enable meaningful lives
- Lifeline Retail funding our Lifeline Crisis Response Services

3. Hospitals

Our Goal: To be known for highly regarded, clinically excellent hospitals delivering the best possible health and life outcomes for patients. We will achieve this via service expansion, focusing on clinical excellence, safety and financial responsibility by:

- Driving efficiency
- Delivering new and innovative models of care
- Establishing the physical infrastructure necessary to support us
- Leveraging and building our workforce strength
- Upgrading our technical assets and capabilities



We made significant progress towards our goals, covered in more detail in the **Our Performance section**, starting on P23.

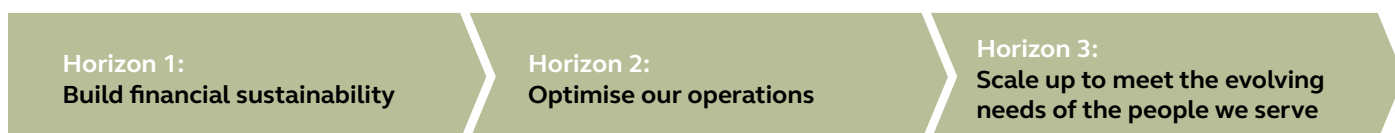
Our strategic pillars

During the year, we reviewed and refreshed our strategic pillars to better align with our vision:



Progress towards our 2030 vision

We are working to a three-phased, long-term strategy:



In Horizon 2, we continue to make great progress in the optimisation of our services; while keeping the people we serve at the heart of everything we do.

We operate within a complex, competitive and regulated environment with compounding economic factors, which are covered in more detail in Our Operating Environment, P14. By focussing on simplifying and streamlining processes, improving governance, and clarifying responsibilities and accountabilities. We are moving towards being a more efficient and adaptable organisation.

We have also worked on future-proofing the organisation's technology backbone, with fit-for-purpose systems offering new business capabilities. This has enabled us to meet the evolving needs of our clients more quickly, overcome challenges, and be well-placed for future growth and innovation in our services.

Work has been done to strengthen the links between Retirement Living, Residential and Community Aged Care, and connect them to service offerings from our Hospitals and Family and Disability Services.

Concurrently, our refreshed operating model has provided greater clarity on accountabilities and expectations across the organisation and is a key step towards further improvements in making it easier for our people to work together and get work done.

By remaining aligned to our long-term strategy while taking measures to strengthen our market position in 2023-24, we are well-placed to achieve our 2030 vision.

Listening to our customers



At UnitingCare Queensland, our customers are at the heart of everything we do. Listening to them is not just a practice but a fundamental principle that drives our quality care and enables us to continuously improve our service offering.

How we listen to our customers

Our Voice of Customer Program is all about staying connected with the communities we serve, our customers, their families and local community members. We do this through surveys, targeted research, consumer advisory groups, and various feedback channels. This year we heard from more than 50,000 people, which is an increase of 25% from last year. This ongoing dialogue helped us stay in tune with what our customers need and want, allowing us to adapt and evolve our services.

How we have met the needs of our customers

Listening and responding to customers has led to some groundbreaking new services and initiatives this year including:

The BlueCare Neighbourhood Model: Our community customers wanted consistent, personalised, at-home care from a small, familiar team of local professionals. To meet this need, BlueCare launched Neighbourhoods throughout Queensland during FY2023-24. This new operating model delivers tailored and individualised care at home or in a care setting of their choice. Clients are thriving due to the personal, genuine, and professional care they receive from familiar faces within their local community.

Retirement Living Concierge: Building on feedback we received last financial year regarding an integrated care continuum strategy, this financial year our Retirement Living and Home Care Partnership Project introduced a VIP concierge service. Offering a friendly, single point of contact for all care enquiries, it helps residents navigate their care options and provides personalised support. With overwhelmingly positive feedback, residents appreciate the seamless assistance they receive.

Lifeline Bookfest enhancements: Lifeline Bookfest in Brisbane gets better every year because we listen to what our attendees tell us, and act on it. A free event with over 1.2m pre-loved books, games, puzzles, CDs, DVDs and magazines, the money raised supports Lifeline's 24-hour crisis support phonenumber and suicide prevention services. Feedback-led improvements included wider aisles, bigger trolleys, and more places for attendees to sit and sort through their potential purchases. The introduction of ComicFest, to sell pre-loved comics at Bookfest, was also the result of listening to what our customers wanted. These changes ensure Bookfest continues to be a success and an enjoyable experience for new and regular attendees.

Hospital initiatives: Based on patient feedback, we have made improvements throughout our hospitals. The Wesley Hospital has provided more training for staff on caring for people with disabilities, and increased its consumer representation in clinical governance, quality and safety. At Buderim Private Hospital, volunteers provide emotional support for patients who do not live locally or have visitors during their stay. St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital improved its policies and procedures for dealing with multi-cultural and gender diverse patients. And the team at St Stephen's Hospital worked with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders to create a display at the front entrance to represent the land and people and incorporate a yarning circle and design features that physically demonstrate acknowledgement and respect for First Nations peoples, culture and land.

Family and Disability Services Customer Advisory Groups (CAGs): These CAGs assist with the integration of customer-centric thinking and organisational service delivery. The Disability Customer Advisory Group is made up of NDIS Participants and their family members, and meets monthly to discuss processes, procedures and opportunities for improvement in Disability Services. Our Youth Advisory Group is made up of young people who are residents or former residents of our Out of Home Care Residential Services. The group developed welcome packs for children and young people entering Out of Home Care services that includes a child-friendly Letter of Introduction to the service; QR code complaints processes and a Boredom Busters Pack. In our Homelessness Services, clients met regularly with the staff to share ideas for improvements and raise any issues – this results in clients feeling heard and supported.

What the people we serve are saying

"The staff I have had are all courteous and respectful as well as fun people to have in my home."

Elsie, BlueCare community services client

"I get the same carers each week and they understand the help I need, which is great."

Janet, BlueCare community services client

"It's the biggest and best! It brings the community together and makes recycling beautiful books an important process filled with enjoyment."

Lifeline Bookfest attendee

"BlueCare provides the services and goods that allow me to live happily and healthily."

Margot, BlueCare community services client

"I have been a patient in several hospitals recently. St Andrew's was amazing compared to other hospitals. No other hospital came close."

Judith, hospital emergency patient

"I go to Bookfest to help raise funds for Lifeline which does fantastic work. I always go home happy. If I find a bargain then great, but it's not the main reason I go."

Lifeline Bookfest Brisbane attendee

"The worker has been wonderful at guiding us through an overwhelming process. She is compassionate, knowledgeable and approachable. I feel very lucky to have had her help and support."

Parent seeking support for young child through the Early Childhood Approach

"Perioperative staff were wonderful and knew how to interact with a 5-year-old and put me as a parent at ease."

Darcy, mother to paediatric hospital inpatient

"He's extremely caring, ...he seems quite genuinely concerned about me and wanting to help."

Participant, Disability Employment Service

"I have been attending the Wesley Breast Clinic regularly since 1995 and the customer service and excellent standard of care has never wavered."

Glenda, Breast Care Clinic hospital patient

"After finding myself in severe financial difficulty I contacted UnitingCare for financial counselling. Being financially embarrassed is extremely stressful but the worker took the time to assess the situation and work towards a solution, reducing my stress levels considerably."

Financial counselling client

Our performance



UnitingCare's services reach and help people from all walks of life throughout Queensland and the Northern Territory. To reflect that, our purpose and our strategy are wide reaching, too.

Keeping people at the heart, we used customer insight and benchmarked ourselves against industry providers to ensure we remained at the forefront of delivering market-leading innovation and compassionate care.

This year we invested in more fit-for-purpose technology so we can keep delivering exceptional outcomes for the people we serve. This allowed us to expand on the innovative treatments and care solutions we offer; while increasing our operational efficiencies so we can better deliver our services.

We continued to innovate to meet the changing needs of the people we serve. BlueCare's new Neighbourhood operating model for the delivery of in-home and community care services was launched, while Sunrise Beach Aged Care home opened in May - based around small household models it is changing the face of aged care and offering bespoke services to residents. Our Family

and Disability Services team leveraged UnitingCare's diverse service offering, establishing the Homelessness Nurse program in partnership with BlueCare nurses to help those sleeping rough on the Gold Coast. And our hospitals lead the way with Australian-first technology, and Centre of Excellence accreditations.

The No vote result after the Voice to Parliament Referendum fueled our commitment to further strengthen and elevate our Reconciliation work and deepen our relationships with First Nations peoples.

We also strengthened our commitment to future-proofing our built environment via improvements and initiatives, alongside introducing heat safety education to save vulnerable lives as the climate warms.

Thanks to the invaluable support and generosity of our donors, we were able to keep innovating and delivering outcomes to those most in need.

This section of our Annual Report gives a detailed overview of our how we progressed against our strategic goals and aims during FY2023-24 (as outlined on P17-19).

Aged Care and Community Services (ACCS)

Our strategic goal: Leading the way with high-quality, innovative, person-centred aged care services in our residential homes and in the community





ACCS - How we progressed against our FY2023-24 goals:

Delivering an innovative community care model

Aim: Offering person-centred, in-home care to people with complex needs, we innovated in a challenging and growing market for improved client outcomes.

- Launched BlueCare Neighbourhoods, the new operating model for the delivery of in-home and community care services. Delivering tailored and individualised services, people receive care at home or in a community setting of their choice from a familiar, local team.

Embedding fit for purpose technology

Aim: State-of-the art systems enabling us to deliver community care at scale, and new technology improving quality and safety for people living in our residential homes.

- Introduced a new technology suite within our Neighbourhoods to reduce manual tasks, enable better communication and offer more scheduling options for clients.
- Completed implementation of the ground-breaking online Diet and Nutrition System to 46 BlueCare residential homes by early 2024. This increases choice and control for residents, while accommodating their dietary and allergy requirements.
- Introduced an E-Medication Management System in residential homes to improve medication management.
- Began the roll out of a new high-tech nurse call system to enable more independence for residents across all BlueCare residential homes.

Investing in our staff

Aim: We want to be an industry employer of choice, with a pool of talented and engaged people with the right mix of skills.

- Finalised three out of four Enterprise Agreements (EA). Thousands of BlueCare staff received an additional minimum 5% salary uplift on top of federal increases, plus enhanced benefits.
- Delivered more than 2,100 education sessions to frontline staff via our new Clinical Education Program, upskilling nurses and clinical leaders so we can continue to provide the safest, highest-quality care.

Offering an enhanced, person-centred approach

Aim: Putting people at the centre of all we do.

- Refreshed and relaunched the BlueCare Tailor Made Service Philosophy and Toolkit. A person-centred philosophy, it informs our whole service culture and all we do. Tailor Made puts people at the heart of care: we design our support around their needs. The client drives the how, what, when, and where. Working together with our clients, residents, and those important to them, we focus on how to achieve the best outcomes for them and enable greater choice and control.

Winning hearts and awards

For the third year in a row, BlueCare was voted **Australia's Most Trusted Brand** in the Home Care QLD category in the prestigious 2024 **Reader's Digest Most Trusted Brands** survey

ACCS delivers residential aged care and community services throughout Queensland as BlueCare. In the Northern Territory, services are delivered by the Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS).

ARRCS is a separate legal entity, operating in a subsidiary-like relationship with UnitingCare Queensland. The ARRCS Board comprises two directors who are affiliated with UnitingCare Queensland, and six independent, non-executive directors who have been appointed based on their skills, experience, and alignment to mission. ARRCS has its own strategic plan and commitments and reports on these to the UnitingCare Queensland Board on an annual basis.

Access ARRCS annual reports and financial statements here: arrcs.org.au/about-us/annual-reviews

Queensland's ageing population has different needs at different phases of each person's life and health. To meet these, we continued to offer the people we serve additional innovative services through our specialised statewide services and allied health teams.

Hospital in the Home

Run in partnership with three UnitingCare Queensland hospitals - The Wesley Hospital, St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital and Buderim Private Hospital - this program offers short-term, acute treatment for clients to have their hospital care at home. This year this service footprint expanded due to a collaboration with the Clinical Nurse Specialised Services Statewide team and BlueCare Neighbourhoods. The BlueCare team receives referrals from UnitingCare hospitals for post-acute, scripted care alongside referrals from non-UnitingCare private hospitals.

Palliative care in harder-to-reach places

Launched in February 2023, the Regional and Remote Palliative Care service has embedded well, successfully passing the National Safety and Quality Health Services Standards in February 2024 and receiving positive client feedback. Referral numbers increased significantly in FY2023-24 with 641 clients and 38,502 occasions of service.

Dementia support

Our innovative In Home Dementia Respite program and its specially trained workforce - the pioneering Dementia Squad - assists clients statewide face to face, online or by phone. This financial year, personal carers from Brisbane were able to complete Dementia care training onsite with Dementia Australia, while personal carers in regional and remote areas can now upskill remotely at TAFE.

Telehealth and allied health services

BlueCare's Clinical Nurse Specialised Services Statewide team delivers expert care and clinical oversight to clients and Neighbourhood stakeholders across Queensland. Expert Telehealth nursing services include comprehensive nursing assessments, so new clients with higher acuity have access to a senior nurse and care planning as they onboard with BlueCare. Specialist nurse-led clinics in continence, lymphoedema and lipedema are run in the South Brisbane area, with plans for significant growth in this area underway.

In addition, BlueCare's Allied Health team has expanded and increased its breadth of coverage across Queensland using dedicated Telehealth teams offering Occupational Therapy, Psychology, Exercise Physiology and Dietetic expertise. The cost-effective move towards embedding telehealth services into all our service streams is resulting in improved clinical outcomes and higher client satisfaction.



Changing the face of Seniors living

We are developing BlueCare's 5.5-hectare site close to Sunrise Beach into a unique, ground-breaking \$100m retirement living and aged care precinct.

Stage one, Sunrise Beach Aged Care, was officially opened in May 2024, with its innovative Household Model bringing BlueCare's Tailor Made service philosophy to life. Based around small households accommodating up to nine people, each residence has the feel of a private home, aimed at boosting the wellbeing and living experience of each resident. They receive bespoke, personalised care with a 24/7 registered nurse on site, alongside regular visits by medical and healthcare professionals.

Each household has a dedicated Care Companion, a newly created role to boost the happiness and comfort of our residents.

Whether it is helping make snacks or meals, or going for a walk together, Care Companions provide much-needed connection.

The retirement living precinct, Sunrise Beach Village, is under construction in partnership with Keyton. Once completed, Sunrise Beach Village will host 122 villas and apartments. Stage one is due for completion in late 2026 with the subsequent two stages by the end of 2028.



"The fact that I now have the same person each visit and she understands my needs makes all the difference."

Ian, BlueCare Neighbourhood client

BlueCare: the last five years

The COVID-19 pandemic had a significant impact on the people we serve and our workforce over several years. This year, we have seen an increase in our community visits, which have nearly returned to pre-pandemic levels. While our overall community client numbers are trending downwards, this reflects our focus on supporting our existing client base with quality care and supporting people with more complex needs. This approach typically sees more hours of care delivered to a slightly lower number of people. This is in line with our strategic goals as we embed BlueCare Neighbourhoods and seek to grow our specialised service offerings.

Service statistic	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Employees*	9,629	8,778	8,595	8,678	8,534
Residential aged care facilities#	47	47	47	45	46
Residential Beds (operational bed licences)#	3,502	3,509	3,509	3,419	3,419
People cared for in our residential services, including residential respite%	5,431	5,604	5,173	6,111	5,934
Vehicles on the road	1,530	1,518	1,534	1,592	1,608
Community visits*	3,400,000	3,244,447	2,841,541	2,726,222	3,076,222
Community clients +	71,346	67,331	60,227	57,835	54,876

*In FY21, 700 BlueCare employees transitioned to UnitingCare Queensland's Family and Disability Services area following a restructure. And a decrease in staffing numbers followed a review of non-frontline roles and subsequent restructure. In FY24 we streamlined our back-of-house support and operations as we implemented new technology systems. These changes mostly impacted non-frontline roles, maintaining our focus on care delivery.

As part of work to optimise our residential portfolio, in FY23 we closed two services, in Brisbane and Bundaberg. In FY24 we opened a new home in Sunrise Beach.

+ Reduction in community clients and community visits between FY21 and FY23 was driven by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic and aged care workforce shortages. UnitingCare Queensland is committed to being an employer of choice with recruitment and engagement strategies to help grow our workforce. In FY24, we focused on ensuring we serve our existing clients and those with more complex care needs. These changes reduced the overall number of community clients but increased our visits and care provision. We also transitioned BlueCare's NDIS and QCSS programs to UnitingCare's Family and Disability Services.

% The increase in people between FY22 and FY23 is due to (i) movement of people due to closures and refurbishments, (ii) people staying in residential services for shorter periods of time and (iii) the addition of transition and interim care places, which have not been included previously. Transitional and Interim Care beds are managed in partnership with regional Hospital and Health Services across Queensland.

BlueCare turns 70!

We marked this incredible milestone by:

- Special services at Uniting Churches, with Her Excellency the Honourable Dr Jeannette Young AC PSM attending Brisbane's West End service.
- Birthday parties at our services across the state.
- Lighting iconic landmarks in blue, including Brisbane's Story Bridge.
- Honouring long-term staff and volunteers (including Cheryl Knott, a BlueCare volunteer for 55 years) at a gala 70th Anniversary and Years of Service dinner at Brisbane's City Hall.

Watch our 70th Anniversary video, and read the commemorative magazine: bluecare.org.au/70-years



People AT THE Heart



“If my clients are happy, I’m happy”

Carer Daniela Mendez is playing a key role in creating a dementia-friendly future for all Queenslanders.

A trainee dementia support carer at BlueCare’s Redland and Alexandra Hills Community Neighbourhood, Daniela offers vital in-home assistance to clients.

Around two in three people with dementia are thought to be living in the community, meaning social isolation and loneliness are big issues. BlueCare staff like Daniela play a crucial role in helping clients feel connected and cared for.

“My clients are living with different levels of dementia,” Daniela explained. “Though they may not always remember exactly who you are, they remember how good you make them feel so they are never worried or hesitant. That’s so special.”

She visits two people a day, and an important part of her role is to also act as a bridge to the world beyond her clients’ four walls. “Because they spend a lot of time inside, many clients like to spend time outdoors,” she added. “One lady I care for is in a wheelchair and loves gardens, so I take her to Wynnum Esplanade for a stroll - she loves it.”

The positive impact she makes to the lives of the people she cares for is a big reason she finds her job so fulfilling. “Knowing that you are doing good and comforting someone means everything. Because in the end, if my clients are happy, I am happy.”

“Though they may not always remember exactly who you are, they remember how good you make them feel so they are never worried or hesitant. That’s so special.”

Retirement Living

Our strategic goal: To be the 'home of choice' for older Queenslanders, providing integrated communities enabling our residents to live life in all its fullness.



It has been 65 years since we opened our first retirement living village: 'Pleasantville – a community for senior citizens' in 1959. Our second village, Iona Senior Citizens Settlement in Kenmore, opened in 1960 and still provides retirement living options today.

Now, decades later, BlueCare has 36 vibrant and thriving villages across the state, providing over 3,500 residents with a sense of belonging, security, independence, community, and a place to call home.

Our commitment to excellence and innovation in senior living means we have always adapted to the evolving needs of our residents. This adaptability allows us to offer a range of living options, from resort style living communities to more affordable traditional retirement villages, each with their own unique offering.

Helping Queenslanders achieve the retirement they deserve

Retirement is about living in the right environment and feeling at home. This year, we received more than 3,000 enquiries about joining our retirement villages. Keeping current residents at the heart of all we do, our team also enabled 207 settlements for future residents, despite a low level of available homes.

The strong enquiry rate was also driven by our continued state-wide marketing focus and a new retirement living brand campaign Full of Living, launched in mid-2023.

Putting our clients at the heart of all we do

Home is where the heart is. We continued to reinvest in our communities with updated and refreshed spaces so residents can live life to its fullest and enjoy the highest standard of living in our villages.

Our highlights included the completion of the Stage 1 refurbishment of Tangara Retirement Village in West End, Brisbane, with upgrades to facades, landscaping, signage and common areas. We also completed community centre upgrades at Argyle Gardens Bundaberg and Caloundra retirement village.

Building connections and community for our residents is important. To help us achieve this, we have embedded an activities and wellness coordinator role across our villages to encourage interaction between our residents, and to connect them to their wider community.

Social engagement and recreational initiatives, such as intergenerational care groups, hosted activities, and wellness classes, were delivered in collaboration with BlueCare Allied Health, village events, inter-site projects, guest speakers and other local information sessions.

We also encouraged connections with UnitingCare services and church congregations.

BlueCare Retirement Living Summary FY2023-24

Employees

102

Number of Villages

36

Number of homes

2,565

Percentage of homes occupied

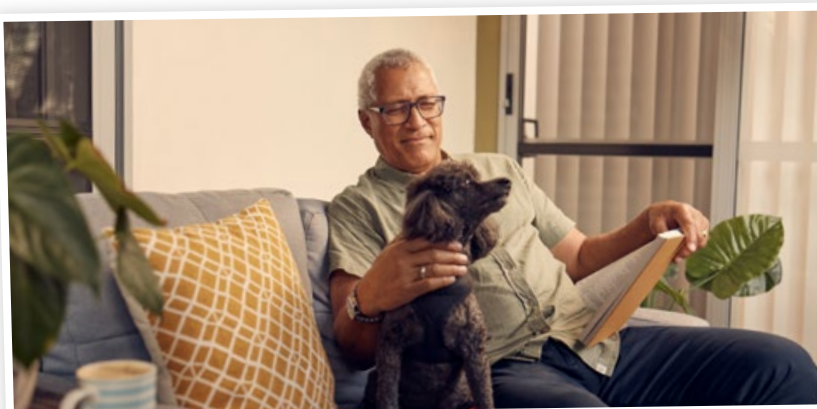
95.20%

Enquiries

3,020

Settlements (against a target of 202)

207



BlueCare Retirement Living won the award for **Best Marketing Campaign for Operators in the Not-for-Profit Sector** at the **annual national Property Council Retirement Living awards** - a testament to the hard work of our team, and the success of our Feel at Home campaign.

People AT THE Heart



Retired and thriving

Connection and community are keys to a happy retirement for two of our residents.

After 30 years working in the electrical industry, most recently in Townsville, John Blanchfield craved a sense of community - and to be close to family - when he retired.

Moving back to his hometown in 2020 with his wife Phyllis, the couple moved into BlueCare's Carlyle Gardens retirement village in Mackay and threw themselves into volunteering, with John becoming president of both the residents' association and social committee within their village.

"I came across people I hadn't seen in 40 years," John said of the opportunity to embrace volunteer work and become socially active within the community. "That made it easy to transition to retirement village living."

While much of John's time is spent organising social events within Carlyle Gardens, Phyllis volunteers at a local op shop for a few hours each week. "It keeps the body and the mind switched on!" she said.

Interacting within their village community has provided vital connection and fulfilment. "I volunteer with a very good group of people," John added. "We get together and cook and help each other out. That's where the camaraderie comes in."

Phyllis added: "It's a nice environment, there's always someone to talk to. The people in the village are so friendly."

"It's a nice environment, there's always someone to talk to. The people in the village are so friendly."

Family and Disability Services (FaDS)

Our strategic goal: Expanding our social impact by extending our service offerings and continuing to deliver high quality, safe, person-centred, culturally inclusive services.





FaDS - we progressed against our FY2023-24 goals by:

Increasing our crisis and wellbeing response

Aim: Supporting people through hardship, including natural disasters.

- Deployed the Lifeline Community Recovery Team to lead the recovery response to the Tara bushfires in October 2023, establishing the Tara Bushfire Emergency Housing Model in 48 hours.
- Established 13 Virtual Community Hubs offering emotional support, deployed 115 Lifeline Community Recovery staff and provided 27,400 episodes of assistance to people impacted by storms and cyclones throughout Queensland.
- Recruited an additional 16 staff to assist a further 2,000 clients experiencing homelessness across the state.
- Established the Homelessness Nurse program in partnership with BlueCare nurses, addressing the immediate health needs of those sleeping rough on the Gold Coast.
- Achieved a 50% increase to Lifeline's Crisis Support volunteer workforce by enabling and training volunteers in regional/remote areas to work from home.
- Increased the number of domestic and family violence outreach and housing support workers via a 30% funding increase.
- Expanded the gambling help service in Central and Central West Queensland.
- Extended the Lifeline to Lifeline Farmer program.

Offering Children, family and individual wellbeing support

Aim: Creating safe spaces, keeping children safe and engaging families in safe parenting.

- Partnered with the Central Queensland Indigenous Development (CQID) team to deliver a culturally safe Intensive Family Support Program in Rockhampton and surrounds.
- Expanded the Men Sustaining Change pilot program.
- Established a new Family Intervention Service (FIS) in Mackay.
- Expanded the number of residential out-of-home and foster and kinship care services available.
- Set up a new youth outreach program in Toowoomba.

Providing disability services that enable meaningful lives

Aim: Empowering our clients to live life in all its fullness.

- Welcomed 185 new Disability Employment Services (DES) participants, supported 135 clients with local employment, assisted 62 people to reach a 52-week employment milestone, and helped 49 clients become independent while employed.
- Launched a pilot Disability Employment Scanning Project in partnership with UnitingCare Hospitals, employing our disability clients to assist hospital teams with vital digital tasks.
- Began delivering Queensland Community Support Scheme (QCSS) services (with BlueCare focusing on services to over 65s), recruiting 120 staff to assist an initial 1200 new clients.
- Extended our partnership with Project SEARCH for three years, with a plan to add 11 new Queensland-based host sites, a goal of 239 internship placements, and a minimum of 70% transitioning to open employment.

Boosting our Lifeline crisis response services

Aim: Securing more funding and increasing retail revenue.

- Secured \$2.1m in annual funding via Queensland Health and Lifeline Australia, enabling an estimated additional 15,000 calls per annum from people in crisis to be answered.
- Raised funding via 12 Lifeline Bookfests, clothing events and instore promotions, including \$82,000 instore through the sale of Lifeline Giving Day tokens during Suicide Prevention Week throughout Queensland.
- Piloted newly designed and safer donation bins in the South-East to help encourage more contributions from the public.
- Remodelled and optimised 13 Lifeline stores across Queensland to improve operational efficiency.
- Introduced new vans, replacing trucks, to maximise the productivity of our fleet and workforce.
- Boosted Lifeline revenue by adding hats and puzzles into our retail product ranges.

We have seen an enormous impact on the mental, physical, and financial wellbeing of our clients in the face of the spiralling cost of living, a lack of affordable housing and rentals, interest rate rises, and fuel price increases again this year. By advocating for the most vulnerable, we elevate the needs of the people we serve to decision makers, policy makers and leaders to inform better outcomes.

During the year, the Queensland National Debt Helpline team was invited to meet with the Reserve Bank of Australia to provide insight into the struggles of our clients and offer data-supported advice to help inform financial decisions for the benefit of all Australians. Our Elder Abuse Prevention Unit joined other industry experts at the Elder Abuse Forum at Brisbane's Parliament House, contributing to discussions around practice and reform.

Diversity, inclusion and increasing our cultural capacity

The people we serve have diverse backgrounds, so we continually focus on building our cultural safety and inclusion. To facilitate this, we hold three internal Family and Disability Services events each year to strengthen practice, foster unity, collaboration, education and understanding:

- First Nations staff and allies attended the two-day Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander GroundWater Gathering, during which they had authentic, culturally safe discussions, and shared knowledge and skills.
- The Multicultural Symposium, held in Logan, offered our staff the opportunity to immerse themselves in two days of cultural learning and celebration.
- Themed 'Breaking Down Barriers,' the Disability Symposium featured insights into how best to support people with disability, and the role family, friends and the broader community play in providing the right support and care.

Our evidence-based approach to benefit the people we serve

Taking a research-led approach to enable better outcomes is a key priority for FaDS. Thank you to all our partners: the experts, Government and industry representatives who helped us co-design and evaluate key programs and projects across the year. We:

- Presented research findings from our Supporting Staff Wellbeing in Child Protection Services program to key sector leaders.
- Delivered the final report and co-designed program concept for tackling loneliness and social isolation in adults.
- Delivered co-designed training around coercive control in family dispute resolution matters.
- Completed the evaluation of the Men Sustaining Change (MSC) program, with positive results for male attendees and their former partners and/or families.
- Fully implemented continuous improvement activities, driven by the evaluation results, around our Men Choosing Change (MCC) program.
- Compiled final data from our Enhancing Children's Journeys Through Out of Home Care program.
- Launched and promoted The Elder Abuse Annual Statistical Report.
- Finalised three evidence-informed projects for family law programs.
- Began work on the scope for a Project SEARCH evaluation, which will run for several years.
- Developed program logics to establish an evidence base for a number of existing services and programs.
- Hosted our first Research to Practice Conference highlighting how our research projects are being implemented.



Milestone: Our Escaping Violence Payment program - a collaborative consortium of national Uniting network partners - reached its second anniversary in November and received continued funding. During these two years, the service has supported over 6,600 people to escape violence.

Queensland's **Farmer to Lifeline Farmer** program launched a new **1800 936 229** number and an additional farmer, Narelle Clem, to continue supporting Queensland farmers in distress.

Family and Disability Services: the last five years

During this time, we have created evidence-based new services while delivering safe, high-quality, person-centred, and culturally inclusive services for our clients. We have partnered with government and leading experts to produce internationally recognised research to inform the quality, safety and efficacy of our service delivery and to expand our forward-thinking research portfolio, including responding to the Disability Royal Commission. Lifeline shops have continued to deliver a valued customer experience, bringing to life the expansion of new product alongside strong donated products whilst refining the look, feel and location of shops. And we have continued to respond to the diverse needs in our communities, striving for sector leadership in key focus areas, ensuring the voices of vulnerable people are heard.

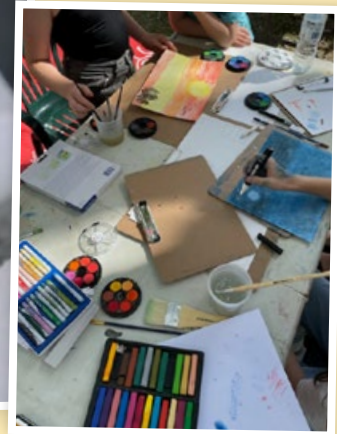
Service statistics	2022-23	2023-24
Services/support provided to families and individuals	326,808	368,195
Children and young people in out-of-home care	1,146	1,262
Contacts to the Lifeline Crisis Support line (including 13YARN & Digital)	140,890	163,982
13YARN Calls	9,196	5,709
Farmer to Lifeline Farmer Contacts by phone	1,891	4,749
Farmer to Lifeline Farmer Property visits	280	582
People living with a disability receiving personal support (including NDIS and QCSS)	545	2,111
People living with a disability who are working through our Employment Services	382	334
Children with disabilities and their families receiving our Early Childhood Approach services	6,349	8,287
Employees	2,215	2,672
Volunteers	6,421	7,016



“I phone Lifeline regularly during tough times, and it helps me through. Sometimes I don’t feel like a person anymore, and Lifeline reminds me I am. I feel validated and stronger. I often think how special they are - wise, thoughtful, incredibly compassionate, beautiful people. Thank you.”

A Lifeline Crisis Support client

People AT THE Heart



“It is the only therapy that worked for me”

How our trauma-informed Recreational Therapy Program helped Mark* go from homeless to hopeful.

When Mark, 47, first engaged with our art therapy program, he was withdrawn and displayed signs of depression and trauma, characterised by limited communication, and black, oversized clothing. His initial small, dark artworks were given names such as Ominous and Outcast.

During the 18+ months Mark spent with our program, he began a remarkable transformation.

Our therapeutic approach focused on creating a safe, non-judgemental space for self-expression, so over time Mark began to open up. The sessions provided him with a way to externalise his emotions, offering a non-verbal outlet for expression and reflection, helping him explore and articulate his feelings visually.

An opera singer in his earlier life, Mark had lost his voice, hope, confidence, and home, falling into homelessness, and withdrawing into silence.

Gradually, Mark's artwork evolved, becoming larger and more colourful, and culminating in a piece he called Hope. It symbolised a turning point in his healing journey, reflecting newfound optimism and resilience.

Mark's social skills and confidence improved significantly, too. He went from a silent participant to actively engaging in conversations and sharing his story through art.

Now housed and receiving professional mental health support, Mark rekindled his interest in gardening and maintains friendships he formed during the program.

He exhibits his art, with new pieces like Fantasy Flowers demonstrating creative passion and optimism.

“I tried many forms of therapy, but art [therapy] provided by UnitingCare's Recreational Therapy Program has been the only one that worked for me,” Mark said. This shows how much power the program has to truly transform lives.

*Name changed to protect privacy

Hospitals

Our strategic goal: To be known for highly regarded, clinically excellent hospitals delivering the best possible health and quality of life outcomes for patients.





Hospitals - how we progressed against our FY2023-24 goals:

Delivering clinical excellence and innovative care options

Aim: Exceptional patient outcomes and quicker recovery times.

- Introduced orthopaedic robots at St Stephen's Hospital, Buderim Private Hospital and St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital to assist orthopaedic surgeons in delivering more accurate, precise joint replacement procedures.
- Commenced a new trial treatment for brain cancer at The Wesley Hospital in collaboration with research partners QIMR Berghofer Medical Research Institute and Wesley Research Institute as trial site facilitators.
- Opened Buderim Private Hospital's new Cardiac Catheter Theatre in April 2024 - used for diagnostic and interventional heart procedures, it features Australian-first technology.
- Made breast cancer surgery easier at St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital and The Wesley Hospital with SCOUT - new, wire-free, surgical guidance technology that can pinpoint a lesion with an accuracy of +/- 1mm.
- Implemented a screening program to reduce the risk of patient malnutrition at The Wesley Hospital.
- Launched phase one of our Virtual Hospital service in November 2023 - a collaboration between UnitingCare's hospitals, BlueCare and our digital and technology teams, the aim is to provide 7,000 virtual hospital bed days in FY2025.

Investing in growth: strengthening our physical infrastructure, technical assets, and capabilities

Aim: Enhancing our capacity to enable better patient experiences.

- Commenced work on a day surgery unit at St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital to address theatre capacity constraints and meet demand.
- Upgraded The Wesley Hospital's Central Sterilising Services Department (CSSD) - at 500m², it is the largest sterilising department in a Queensland private hospital.

Achieving accreditation for new Centres of Excellence

Aim: Maintaining superior standards and achieving new accreditations.

- In October 2023, St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital achieved accreditation from the Surgical Review Corporation as a Centre of Excellence in Orthopaedic Surgery, joining The Wesley Hospital as the only two hospitals in Australia to hold this distinction.
- In February 2024, The Wesley Hospital achieved accreditation as a Centre of Excellence in Breast Treatment since 2017. This is the hospital's fifth Centre of Excellence.

Driving operational efficiencies

Aim: Better systems and processes to reduce staff workload and achieve better patient outcomes.

- Embedded the SurgiNet application in The Wesley Hospital and St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital: an electronic medical record system, it streamlines clinical and administrative workflows and is now live across all our hospitals.
- Established the Health Intelligence Initiative to deliver a strategy for managing our largest asset: data.

Leveraging and building our workforce strength

Aim: Increase capability of existing staff and volunteers while attracting and retaining new talent.

- Recruited 103 graduate nurses via our Graduate Nurse Program for registered and enrolled nurses.
- Expanded The Wesley Hospital's Compassionate Companions volunteer program - which provides connection and support to hospital patients - by starting to train volunteers to engage with patients living with dementia or experiencing delirium while in hospital.
- Provided opportunities for young people with disability to gain work experience in our Brisbane-metro hospitals through Project SEARCH 12-month internships.



“I just felt very well looked after and treated as an intelligent individual, not just another person going through the ‘production line.’”

Phillip, hospital inpatient

Nationwide, private hospitals continued to face many challenges - including changing patient needs, staff shortages and rising costs. Our hospitals rose to the challenge with a commitment to increasing financial resilience by introducing operational efficiencies and embedding new technology and systems.

This ensures that we can maintain the exceptional standards of care that our hospitals are renowned for and paves the way for the growth and innovation that is key for optimum patient health and outcomes.

A commitment to excellence and innovation

UnitingCare hospitals collectively held six Centre of Excellence (CoE) accreditations as at 30 June 2024, awarded by the Surgical Review Corporation, in the areas of robotic surgery, minimally invasive surgery, breast treatment, metabolic and bariatric surgery, with orthopaedic surgery a CoE at both Brisbane hospitals.

Our hospitals were evaluated on criteria including surgical volumes and experience, treatment pathways, equipment, and patient education. An accreditation signals a demonstrated commitment to safe, high-quality care and optimal outcomes for patients.

Evolving and innovating to meet patient needs

The day surgery expansion began at St Andrew’s War Memorial Hospital this year. This additional service will provide more theatre capacity and enable same day discharge for patients. Going forward, the new unit is expected to increase surgical capacity at St Andrew’s by 21 percent and will offer an opportunity for us to innovate, test, learn, and expand different models – with proven impact on efficiency and margin – across our portfolio.

The Electronic Medical Record transformation, via the SurgiNet application increased our operational efficiency which flowed through to patient care and healthcare delivery. The data generated by SurgiNet enables us to access real-time patient admission and treatment information to help our teams make swift, informed decisions.

The introduction of more Mako orthopaedic robots this year is another win for our patients, offering quicker rehabilitation, shorter hospital stays, greater implant longevity and happier patients. The Mako robots were first commissioned for The Wesley Hospital in August 2018.

A less invasive option for breast surgery became available this year for our patients at St Andrew’s War Memorial Hospital and The Wesley Hospital. The wire-free, SCOUT surgical guidance technology offers a range of benefits including less discomfort for patients, better accuracy and precision, shorter surgery time and extensively reduced re-excision rates, resulting in a much better patient experience than the traditional approach.

Leading us into the future

After four and a half years as the Group Executive for our hospitals group, Michael Krieg departed the organisation in 2023. Under Michael’s leadership, UnitingCare hospitals established multiple Centres of Excellence, undertook a crucial upgrade to The Wesley Hospital’s Central Sterilising Services Department and began implementing SurgiNet. Michael also saw us safely through the COVID-19 pandemic, several natural disasters and two cyber incidents, to name just some of his achievements.

David Harper was appointed to the Group Executive - Hospitals role in January 2024. Formerly the General Manager at The Wesley Hospital, David has the background, knowledge, and expertise to lead our hospitals into a future in which we continue to innovate and evolve to achieve the best possible outcomes for the people and communities we serve.



UnitingCare hospitals: the last five years

During the last five years we have navigated through a global COVID-19 pandemic and its continuing effects. Last financial year, our admissions finally rose to almost pre-COVID levels, with this year seeing admissions rise another 5 percent. To meet the increasing demand for healthcare services we have embedded new technology – some an Australian first – alongside commencing work on a new day surgery unit for St Andrew’s War Memorial Hospital. We have also introduced a virtual hospital program for some of our services, to help eligible patients recover at home with oversight by our clinical experts. We remain committed to offering the highest standards of compassionate care, industry-leading innovation, and clinical excellence.

Statistics	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24
Employees	4,266	4,384	4,480	4,769	4,728
Admissions	132,905	132,381	133,180	140,421	147,394
Bed Days/Year	342,695	342,639	342,190	348,986	361,947
Emergency department presentation	38,593	38,992	46,718	50,764	53,575
Medical students	343	129	206	425	446
Procedures	80,284	88,178	82,413	86,265	89,791
Volunteers	626	346	290	117	370

Celebrating 25 years of Choices for patients with cancer

Choices Cancer Support Centre, at The Wesley Hospital, proudly celebrated its 25th anniversary in January 2024. Established by Brisbane Broncos head coach Kevin Walters in loving memory of his late wife, Kim, the program initially provided essential support services for women facing breast cancer. Today it serves more than 5,000 women and men a year who are receiving cancer treatment, as well as their families and loved ones.



Artwork with meaning

A special First Nations artwork ‘Ancestors continue to watch over Country’ was unveiled at St Stephen’s Hospital in Hervey Bay. A symbol of culture and connection created to say: ‘you are welcome here.’ The artwork symbolises the land, water, sky, and ancestral spirits that watch over this land.

People AT THE Heart



Innovative tech giving life-changing results

The robots helping our surgeons deliver the best possible outcomes for our patients.

Patients from across the Wide Bay region, Sunshine Coast and Brisbane can now have innovative hip and knee replacement surgery following the arrival of three Mako orthopaedic robots at St Stephen's Hospital, Buderim Private Hospital, and St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital.

The state-of-the-art robotic technology is designed to improve outcomes by delivering new levels of accuracy and precision in joint replacement surgery. The technology has been credited with quicker patient rehabilitation, shorter hospital stays, greater implant longevity and increased satisfaction.

Doug MacLean was one of the first to benefit from the new robotic surgery at St Stephen's Hospital. The Hervey Bay resident underwent bilateral knee replacement surgery to relieve the pain he was experiencing because of knee degeneration caused by arthritis.

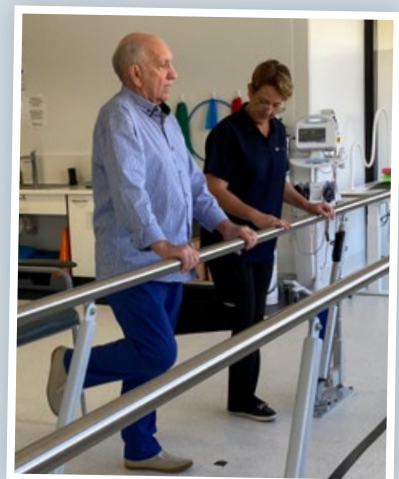
"The pain in my right knee was particularly bad – I had become limited in what I could do. I was delighted to hear about the new robot and was very willing to get on with the surgery. I just needed relief from the pain I was experiencing," Doug said.

"The whole experience for me was brilliant. I did not experience severe pain at all and was up on my feet the day after surgery. Within three weeks, I was walking around without crutches," he added.

"I continued having regular rehabilitation appointments at St Stephen's in the month following surgery and could feel myself getting better every day.

"My objective now is to get back to golf!"

"The whole experience for me was brilliant. I did not experience severe pain at all and was up on my feet the day after surgery.."



Advancing Reconciliation

Our strategic goal: Providing a safe, welcoming and culturally responsible environment, while advocating for social justice for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples within our workforce and the communities we serve. We will be positive, unified, and healthy.





The Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) team progressed against our Reconciliation goals in FY2023-24 by:

Strengthening relationships and connection

Aim: to facilitate opportunities for staff to become more informed allies.

- Organised culturally immersive experiences on Country across Queensland with Traditional Custodians to empower staff to become better allies.
- Delivered two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health First Aid (AMHFA) courses quarterly across all service areas to increase cultural capacity and knowledge of staff who serve First Nations clients and communities.

Demonstrating respect

Aim: to uphold the values and beliefs of First Nations peoples through a commitment to self-determination and learning of culture, language, and history.

- Continued to strengthen the knowledge of new and existing staff around culturally safe and respectful working environments via our online Cultural Appreciation Program.

Improving work opportunities and work environments

Aim: working together with teams across the organisation to identify necessary changes.

- Collaborated with staff and the people we serve to help shape the 2024-2027 Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP), for release in August 2024.
- Partnered with the Kabi Kabi People's Aboriginal Corporation to establish an ongoing First Nations traineeship initiative through the BlueCare Property Team.
- Elevated our partnership with CareerTrackers by implementing additional opportunities for First Nations undergraduate students within UnitingCare's hospital clinical spaces.
- Began working with the Uniting First Peoples Network and UnitingCare Australia to release a statement on anti-racism, aiming to use this to help build a framework around addressing workplace racism.
- Developed UnitingCare's inaugural Dreamline Leaders First Nations Emerging Leaders program to connect senior leadership as mentors to a cohort of First Nations employees to stand strong in their culture within the leadership space.
- Contributed to the Wellbeing at Work Australian Research Council Linkage Project between Griffith University and UnitingCare Queensland, supporting focus groups and interviews held across our hospitals and aged care homes.

“The outcome of the Voice to Parliament vote will not deter UnitingCare from its deep and abiding commitment to walking alongside First Nations Peoples to create better outcomes and support making a difference in their lives.”

Craig Barke, CEO, UnitingCare Queensland

The No vote in the Voice to Parliament Referendum served to fuel our commitment to further strengthening and elevating our Reconciliation work.

Since the Referendum, we have received increasing support and queries from staff who are interested in learning more about how to become an informed ally to First Nations peoples. We have a dedicated group of allies who are passionate advocates for Reconciliation and committed to establishing a formal First Nations Allyship Network.

Educating and empowering our allies

During FY2023-24, as we entered the third year of our Stretch Reconciliation Action Plan, we made strong progress in supporting our colleagues to become better allies of Reconciliation.

UnitingCare Queensland's Cultural Appreciation training, developed by the Learning and Development team in conjunction with First Nations staff, was a valuable tool in providing knowledge and education in First Nations perspectives of the history and modern-day impacts of colonisation, connecting to culture and cultural safety.

More than 39,600 modules of the award-winning training were completed, with two modules released to an external party for use.

Celebrating our culture

Acknowledging National Reconciliation Week and NAIDOC Week by holding events across our organisation is an important way for us to connect, educate and empower our colleagues, those we serve, and local communities.

During NAIDOC Week 2023, themed For Our Elders, we held community events throughout Queensland, highlighting the achievements and strengths of First Nations people's culture and heritage.

In honour of National Reconciliation Week 2024, themed Now More than Ever, we held events including yarning, truth-telling, and sharing of culture throughout our services. It was a call to action and a reminder that now more than ever the fight for justice and the rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples will – and must – continue.

Event attendees told us:

"I felt a sense of companionship, hope and eagerness to learn and share more."

"There was a feeling of a united and proud community."

"I got an understanding of UnitingCare's relationship with First Nations peoples and the history of the Uniting Church regarding acknowledging and addressing past wrongs."

"Hearing stories of different First Nations experiences of being a UnitingCare employee, delivering services to First Nations communities and being a First Nations person in Australia is always interesting and challenges some preconceived ideas of what those journeys might be like."



A win for our CareerTracker!

One of our talented interns, Anna Skoubourdis (left), scooped the Golden Diary award - recognising the achievement of maintaining a high point GPA while studying and interning - at the CareerTrackers Gala Awards Night in February 2024. We are proud of Anna, and of the work all our interns achieve as part of our CareerTrackers partnership.

People AT THE Heart

“I feel like a sponge, absorbing all the knowledge”

Meet Zoe Wildman, a dedicated and passionate 19-year-old Koa, Kuku Yalanji (Wakka Wakka) nursing student, who is undergoing a CareerTrackers internship at The Wesley Hospital.

Currently in her second year of a Bachelor of Nursing at the University of Queensland, Zoe, second from left in the photo, is deeply passionate about healthcare. While at The Wesley Hospital, Zoe has been able to shadow and learn from staff in the maternity, paediatrics, orderly services, and ward reception departments, enriching her understanding of nursing and overall healthcare delivery.

Zoe said this internship was different from normal student placements she had completed through university: “Here at the hospital I am able to observe, learn and grow at my own pace and not worry about being assessed at the same time. I feel like a sponge absorbing all the knowledge,” she explained.

“The staff who have been teaching me have been so supportive, I have absolutely loved every minute of this so far. The highlight for me was being able to witness a caesarean birth, making me interested in paediatric nursing - however I am also interested in cardiology or theatre nursing.”

As a First Nations woman, Zoe advocates for greater Indigenous representation in the nursing profession, emphasising the importance of culturally sensitive care and advocating for equitable healthcare access for all.

UnitingCare’s RAP Team has collaborated closely with CareerTrackers for several years, offering internship opportunities across our services including psychology, social work and nursing, fostering professional growth and development among First Nations students.

“The staff who have been teaching me have been so supportive, I have absolutely loved every minute of this so far.”



Future-proofing the environment

Our strategic goal: To create a greener, healthier, fairer tomorrow.





Environment and sustainability - how we progressed our goals in FY2023-24:

Learn more about our sustainability performance in our [Annual Environmental Sustainability Report](#)

Improving our built environment

Aim: Reduce our carbon footprint by 70% and source 100% of our electricity from renewable energy.

- Completed a major electrification initiative at The Wesley Hospital, upgrading the Central Sterilising Services Department from gas to all-electric, which will reduce the hospital's gas consumption by 5-7%.
- Engaged an external net-zero consultancy to develop an organisation-wide Energy Reduction Plan.
- UnitingCare's Strategic Property Plan FY25 – FY27 included key sustainability objectives, embedding energy reduction and climate resilience considerations into our three-year property goals.

Reducing waste

Aim: Divert from landfill 30% of the non-clinical waste we generate and reduce waste by 5% at hospitals and aged care facilities.

- Established a Deed of Donation between UnitingCare and Rotary Australia Rehoming Equipment (RARE) program, which was leveraged by The Wesley Hospital to rehome 11.7 tonnes of equipment. In 2024, the program is expanding into BlueCare, Family and Disability Services, and other UnitingCare hospitals.

Empowering our people

Aim: Upskill 20% of employees through training and increase the number of Green Champions by 100%

- Strengthened collaboration between the sustainability programs of UnitingCare Queensland, Wesley Mission Queensland and Synod, culminating in a joint World Environment Day event on 5 June 2024.
- Launched an industry-leading climate change resilience initiative - BlueCare's heat health campaign - in summer 2023-24.
- Supported 16 outstanding employees and teams who were nominated for the 2023 Full Circle & Reconciliation Awards because they promoted new ways to reduce our environmental footprint.
- Upskilled 435 staff through behaviour change campaigns, team training sessions, senior leader orientation, and engagement events.

Targeting our purchasing power

Aim: Ensure 100% of strategic procurement tenders include environmental sustainability criteria

- Embedded environmental sustainability criteria in all nine of the strategic tenders run during the year.
- Continued to gradually reduce the use of desflurane in our hospitals - it is an anaesthetic gas with potent global warming potential.

Transitioning our vehicles

Aim: Reduce passenger fleet fuel usage to 4.5 litres per 100 km and transition to a 100% hybrid and electric passenger fleet.

- Continued to decarbonise our fleet, with a focus on reducing the number of passenger vehicles -- down to 1,762 in FY2023-24 from 1,842 last year. Our passenger fleet is now 77% hybrid or electric, with fuel efficiency further improved by 5% in FY2023-24, to 5.6 litres per 100 kilometres.
- Promoted and enabled greater work-from-home opportunities for employees through the implementation of our Flexi-Choice Framework. As well as providing social benefits, working from home reduces the fuel usage and pollution associated with commuting.

Leading the way in climate change resilience

Aim: Advocate for change, achieve our sustainability targets, and have our sustainability leadership recognised through awards

- Uplifted the organisation's sustainability governance, including elevating the Environmental Sustainability Committee to senior leadership accountability, establishing a permanent Climate Risk Working Group, and overhauling our Environmental Sustainability Policy.
- Developed UnitingCare Queensland's first Climate Change Risk Assessment, to better understand how climate change may impact our people, clients, property, and service model in the decades ahead.
- Contributed a submission to the Australian Government's National Health and Climate Strategy, advocating for a nationally consistent emissions measurement methodology, early mover incentives and recognition, and practical approaches to effectively engage First Nations peoples in the Strategy's design and delivery to enable and support the sustainable and responsible delivery of our health and community services into the future.

2023-24 saw higher temperatures, elevated bushfire risk, more intense tropical cyclones, and rainfall in the north of the state - the Queensland Government's predictions in its 2019 climate report are proving extremely accurate. As the impacts to human health and wellbeing impacts of our changing climate are increasing, so is action from the health, aged care, and community sectors.

At UnitingCare Queensland, climate change risk and resilience has become a central focus of our sustainability program. In the last year, we are proud to have delivered our first Climate Change Risk Assessment with expert support from our internal Climate Risk Working Group. This industry-leading work will strengthen our ability to respond to the physical and transitional/systemic risks posed by climate change, including the impacts of extreme weather events on our vulnerable client groups – older customers, people with chronic health conditions, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and those experiencing financial hardship.

The significance of climate-related health risks was elevated by the Australian Government in December 2023, with the launch of Australia's first National Health and Climate Strategy. This landmark Strategy sets out a plan for building a net zero, climate resilient health and aged care system – a vision that we are proudly committed to working towards.



People AT THE Heart

A campaign to save lives

Raising heat safety awareness to protect our most vulnerable clients and the people who serve them.

Heatwaves are the deadliest natural hazard in Queensland, according to the state government. With FY2023-24 bringing higher-than-average hot weather and many localised extreme heat records, it was imperative we acted to safeguard the most vulnerable: those over 65, who have a high risk of heat-related illness, alongside minimising the risk of heat-related illness for our big-hearted BlueCare team who visit clients at home during heatwaves.

To bring our goal to life, we partnered with Griffith University who provided us with educational video resources and expertise. Supported by funding from the Queensland Government, we created simple and engaging resources, plus a three-stage campaign to educate our elderly clients and our workforce on how to stay heat-safe during summer's most searingly hot days.

We reached clients via a myriad of touchpoints. Heat-safety content was created for Bluecare.org.au, and thousands of fridge magnets were given to our community clients, featuring simple tips on preparing for heat, creating a cool home, and what to do if experiencing heat stroke/exhaustion. Messaging was added to customer statements and invoices, alongside targeted social media posts timed to hit when heatwaves were predicted. And we boosted staff awareness via posters, fact sheets, messaging on internal platforms and educational talks and events.

These tools and templates are now a valuable resource we can build on to safeguard our clients and employees for years to come. Access our heat safety content at www.bluecare.org.au/heat-safety

Our campaign success by numbers:

Page impressions for our targeted heat safety Facebook ads:

1 million

Fridge magnets for clients:

13,650

Customers who received heat health messaging on their statements and invoices three+ times:

30,169

Helping us keep people at the heart

Our strategic goal: We offer everyone the opportunity to have a positive impact and to make the world a better place through our fundraising program.



Many thousands of people are in desperate need of the compassionate, person-centred care and assistance offered by UnitingCare via our crisis support, hospitals, aged care and family and disability services. It is thanks to the generosity of our donors, that we can give them the help they need. From donating to appeals, gifts in Wills, or partnering with us, this support can be life-changing and life saving for our clients, residents, and patients.

The impact of the support we receive

The support of donors and partners is vital in helping us to put the people we serve at the heart of all we do, enabling us to meet their evolving needs now and in the future.

Donations help us fund life-saving support and technology such as recruitment and training of crisis support workers for Lifeline, growing the Dementia Support Squad at BlueCare, installing cuddle beds at The Wesley Hospital for end-of-life care and upgrades to the physical rehabilitation ward at St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital.

Thank you

UnitingCare relies on support from throughout Queensland – from Church and community groups to corporate partners, individuals, and the government – to deliver on our mission to help the people we serve live life in all its fullness. Your generosity helps us make a positive difference to the lives of so many.

Thank you to the:

- Donors
- Members of the Uniting Church
- Volunteers and our hospital auxiliaries
- Community groups
- Corporate partners
- Charitable trusts and foundations
- Australian Government
- Queensland Government
- Local government and councils
- UnitingCare employees
- Individual and family donors
- Lifeline retail and Lifeline Bookfest supporters

To all our past, present, and future supporters – you are an integral part of the UnitingCare family. Your generosity empowers us to continue our mission of service and care.

Behind the scenes

Our fundraising team is privileged to work with supporters and partners across all our fundraising activities. Throughout our organisation there are also many members of committees and auxiliaries who volunteer their time to help us raise money and support specific appeals so that we can continue to deliver the highest standards of service and compassionate care to the people we serve throughout Queensland.

Join us in making a difference

From extraordinary acts of kindness such as people remembering us in their Will (Gifts in Wills enable us to fund ongoing support services now and into the future), to regular contributions or one-off donations, everything we receive is deeply appreciated.

You can leave a gift in your Will to UnitingCare Queensland or a specific service including:

*Blue Care *Lifeline *The Wesley Hospital *St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital *St Stephen's Hospital *Buderim Private Hospital *Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (Northern Territory)

Contact our Planned Giving Manager for further information: Call us on 1800 001 953 or email us at plannedgiving@ucareqld.com.au



People AT THE Heart



During FY2023-24,
we have received:

\$6.9m

From Gifts in Wills – it is a privilege to honour the wishes of these generous individuals and ensuring their legacy lives on

\$590,000+

Donated by Corporate Partners alongside \$68,000 worth of in-kind support

\$119,043

From 545 people who generously gave regular donations

\$1.2m+

Donated by over 7,000 people in support of our key campaigns

\$365,419

Was raised during Lifeline's Giving Day which helped us answer more calls to Lifeline Crisis Support phonedlines

\$646,000

Is the combined total received via five successful grant applications

The technology bringing care, comfort, and connection

For residents of BlueCare's aged care homes across Queensland, seeing the doctor is now a whole lot easier, thanks to our compassionate donors.

BlueCare residents can receive GP consultations without leaving their room, or home, with the introduction of specialised, mobile Telehealth Carts.

The high-tech carts have two large video screens that connect residents directly with their doctor via a video call. High-definition cameras can zoom in to closely examine wounds, rashes, or other areas of concern. The carts are also equipped with digital diagnostic tools like stethoscopes, otoscopes and other devices that allow the doctor to remotely assess the patient as if they are right there in the room.

Beyond just providing access to GPs, the carts enable residents to be diagnosed and begin treatment quickly - preventing many from needing to go to hospital. "We can show the doctor a wound that's developed and likely get antibiotics or other medications prescribed that same day," says Marie, a BlueCare nurse. "Without it, that process could take days during which the wound could really deteriorate."

The Telehealth Carts are also bridging the gap caused by the nationwide shortage of GPs, which has made it difficult to find doctors able to see residents after-hours or visit them in rural areas.

Another bonus is that a resident's loved ones can join in on these medical video calls. "Families get see that their mum or dad is okay. And residents get that precious facetime despite difficult circumstances," Marie says.

Elsie* is one of those residents. Though her family lives miles away, with the push of a button by her nurse, Elsie can see, hear, and connect with her loved ones in a way that defies distance and isolation.

More than just providing access to doctors, these carts are bringing reassurance, care, comfort, and connection when residents need it most.

*Name changed for privacy

Our people

Our strategic goal: Ensuring UnitingCare is a great place to be, unites safety with care, has a future fit workforce, we grow our people, and we work together to deliver what matters.





People and Culture - progression against our people first strategic goals during FY2023-24:

We are a great place to be

Aim: We believe in creating a place where everybody belongs, in which our people are heard, share ideas openly, and feel valued.

- Commenced a review of our onboarding process to make it more consistent, streamlined and employee-first; redesigned our orientation package; and developed a more targeted approach to improving the unique experience of staff.
- Introduced an intuitive, system-supported Performance Development Conversation Process, offering clearer learning and development pathways.
- Increased our diversity, equity, and inclusion resources to support staff, including an online multi-cultural hub, and expanded our domestic and family violence information.
- Introduced the Wellbeing Framework Leadership package offering guidance on how to incorporate the organisation's wellbeing philosophies.
- Continued to measure our performance against our Employee Value Proposition (EVP) and use insights provided by the Employee Listening Framework.

We unite safety with care

Aim: We deliver quality services through the prioritisation of the safety and wellbeing of our people.

- Established a Psychosocial Safety Working Group, strengthening our capability to support mental wellbeing and meet new legislative obligations in the Queensland Code of Practice: Managing the Risks of Psychosocial Hazard at Work.
- Launched a United against Bullying and Harassment campaign to educate staff and express our organisation's zero-tolerance stance.
- Developed a Treating People Fairly in the Workplace policy and procedure to support our people.
- Rolled out a Health Safety Wellbeing (HSW) Lead Indicator Awareness campaign aimed at improving reporting, appropriate prioritisation and hazard response. This shift achieved 148% of our target, and a 41% reduction in total incapacity days.

We are a future fit workforce

Aim: We are deliberate in ensuring our people are in the right place, doing the right work, at the right time, supporting and empowering them to deliver for those in our care.

- Consolidated 13 elapsed workforce Enterprise Agreements (EA), including successfully renegotiating five EAs with negotiations underway for a further two. This enabled us to deliver increased pay and improved conditions to approximately 7,300 employees and boosted our market competitiveness and staff satisfaction, reducing the need for agency staff.
- Leveraged Centres of Excellence that drive innovation and contemporary practice and formed a Community of Practice to maximise our People and Culture resources while supporting growth and development.

We grow our people

Aim: We invest in our people so we can grow. Because, when we grow, so does our impact.

- Produced a successful Role of the Leader Accountability Framework pilot to support development of our leaders.
- Upgraded our learning and development platform to Grow Gateway Learning: Learning for individual development increased by 100%, and 87% of courses received an average 4 or 5 out of 5 rating.
- Our Executive Leadership Team and more than 200 senior and emerging leaders across the organisation attended quarterly CEO Forums, enabling them to become champions of key organisational priorities.

We work together to deliver what matters

Aim: An innovative delivery-focused approach enabling our people to work together to deliver what matters most.

- Implemented an organisation-wide human resource information system (HRIS) Workday in April 2024 to boost efficiency and improve reporting to help inform strategic workforce planning.
- Refined and launched enhanced contemporary workforce insights for leaders across the organisation.



“My team and leadership team has an incredible level of dedication, compassion, and unwavering commitment to making a difference in the lives of others.”

Personal Carer, BlueCare

Putting our people first

At the heart of everything we do are our people. Our exceptional team of 16,848 staff and 8679 volunteers – both on the frontline and behind the scenes – are the lifeblood of our organisation, doing their utmost for the people we serve every day. It is thanks to their expertise, compassion, kindness, and dedication to helping others that we can deliver world-class services, support, and care.

The People and Culture team is dedicated to the development and implementation of the People First Strategy, our roadmap to making UnitingCare the sector’s employer of choice, attracting quality people and supporting their development.

Creating a sustainable future

During FY2023-24, we continued to navigate the workforce challenges our sectors face. In response, we implemented targeted acquisition plans alongside increasing the capability of our existing workforce.

We also undertook an organisational restructure as part of our transformation journey, resulting in changes across our workforce. This was part of a program to ensure the organisation’s financial sustainability in the face of rising costs associated with new funding arrangements and regulations, combined with ongoing skill shortages impacting frontline services. These changes were carefully considered, and consultation undertaken with unions who represented impacted groups.

Through all this, we continued to listen to our workforce across a range of channels and forums via our Employee Listening Program. These insights helped inform workforce priorities and planning, to enable us to meet external operating environment challenges, and create a sustainable future.

Key statistics – workforce

Note: excludes contingent/contractor workforce.

Full time	Female
3,896	13,169
Part time	Male
9,508	3,414
Casual	Undisclosed
3,203	24
Volunteers	
8,679	



Award-winning training



Our deep commitment to walking with and for First Nations Peoples was exemplified by our Cultural Appreciation training. It focuses on understanding and respecting the role our First Nations Peoples play. UnitingCare Queensland won the Australian Institute of Training and Development’s Excellence Award for Best Diversity and Inclusion Program: a testament to the importance of lifelong, respectful learning. We acknowledge all the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who contributed to this valuable truth-telling resource.



Our Volunteers

Our incredible volunteer workforce, comprising 8,679 compassionate people, is the backbone of our organisation.

Working across our services, volunteers are answering phone calls from people in crisis; helping people displaced by natural disasters; stacking books and serving customers at Lifeline Bookfest; greeting and spending time with patients at our hospitals; offering companionship to BlueCare residents – to name a handful of important roles in which they serve, ensuring the people in our care thrive.

Our Volunteer Experience Team released its first Volunteer Impact Report, to demonstrate the true value of the services provided by our volunteer workforce – which was estimated at over \$40m – and the impact they make on our organisation and the people and communities we serve. For example, the Vulnerable In-Patient (VIP) service at The Wesley Hospital, staffed by trained volunteers, has resulted in increased wellbeing and improved recovery times for patients, fewer falls, and fewer calls requiring nurse responses.

Despite the nationwide trend for declining volunteer numbers, our volunteer workforce expanded from 6,639 last financial year, to 8,679 in FY2023-24.

Our Volunteer Experience Team brought together a Youth Volunteer Consultant Group to act as thought leaders and advocates to help us engage the 18–25-year-old demographic, and we simplified the corporate volunteering process to make it easier for people to connect.

To maintain growth, we introduced a new database to keep track of volunteers across the state, while continuing to grow our volunteer footprint via our always-on strategy of active recruitment and engagement.

We believe volunteering should be viewed as a space for personal growth and development, as well as a chance to contribute to UnitingCare’s purpose. We ensure best practice is used by our staff who work with volunteers, by continuing to use our Volunteer Engagement Framework. This establishes the basic values, attitudes, and principles towards volunteering. It demonstrates our genuine commitment to our volunteers by having a consistent, organisation-wide approach to leadership, workforce planning, operations, and management. This is achieved through the Volunteer Engagement Model and measured against the UnitingCare Volunteer Engagement Standards.



“Volunteering shines a light on our humanity, innate goodness and capacity to bring compassion and love to those who need these the most.”

DJ Cronin, Volunteer Experience Manager

People AT THE Heart



The Full Circle and Reconciliation Awards

We value our people and aim to empower them to achieve their full potential by fostering an environment in which they are recognised and supported. Each year we celebrate outstanding service through the Full Circle and Reconciliation Awards. We encourage nominations for the 11 categories to be submitted from throughout the entire organisation as an opportunity to honour exceptional work.

In 2023, we received 980 nominations - a tribute to the depth of talent, skill, and commitment within our teams.

The Winners of the 2023 Full Circle and Reconciliation Awards

Kym Korbe, Corporate Services

Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Leadership: Recognising outstanding leadership from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

In a landmark year for Indigenous rights, Kym Korbe fostered an environment where self-education coincided with guided discussions, storytelling, and community events.



Cherbourg Safe House, Family and Disability Services

Healthy Communities: Recognising a service, project or initiative that embodies the values of our Reconciliation Action Plan.

The Cherbourg Women's DV (Domestic Violence) Safe House team (Image 1) works closely with Elders and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community to promote healthy relationships, respect, and the importance of families.



Ny-ku Byun Elders Village, Aged Care and Community Services

Healthy Communities: Recognising a service, project or initiative that embodies the values of our Reconciliation Action Plan.

Ny-ku Byun Elders Village has created a safe space for Elders where families, culture and connection are prioritised in their own community.



Cheryl Nott, Aged Care and Community Services

Behind the Scenes: Making remarkable and selfless contributions to the people they serve and their fellow volunteers.

Cheryl Nott (Image 2) began volunteering with BlueCare in her early teens through the Blue Nurse Door Knock appeal. After joining The Friends of the Blue Nurses at Springwood, Cheryl joined the team as Volunteer Administration Assistant - 26 years later, she continues to serve in this role.



BlueCare Community Connections Safe Alert Volunteers, Aged Care and Community Services

Changing Lives, Theirs Included: Brightening the lives of others through volunteering and enriching their own lives in the process.

The Safe Alert Team (Image 3) volunteers support a program which enables people to continue living independently in their own homes, while increasing their self-esteem and wellbeing.





Matthew Green and the Long COVID Clinic (The Wesley Hospital), Hospitals

Wish I'd Thought of That: Finding innovative solutions, discovering new possibilities and problem solving.

The Allied Health team (Image 4), led by Matthew Green at The Wesley Hospital, successfully established the first clinic dedicated to treating Long COVID in Queensland.



Dementia In-Home Respite Program, Aged Care and Community Services

Caring and Connecting: Demonstrating an ongoing commitment for our clients' well-being through passion, care, and effective governance.

The Dementia In-Home Respite Program provides quality care services – via a team of personal care workers specifically trained in dementia – who deliver extended hours of care to dementia clients in the community.



Rash Khan, Corporate Services

You're an Inspiration: Promoting an environment where people feel valued and motivated to do their best.

Rash Khan (Image 5) is an exemplary role model and outstanding leader, who has had a transformative impact on his team by fostering a culture of openness, growth, and innovation.



Homelessness and Domestic Violence Recreational Therapy Program, Family and Disability Services

Bringing People Together: Breaking down barriers to connect teams, tools, and people to enable better outcomes.

The Homelessness and Domestic Violence Recreational Therapy Program (Image 7) fosters a culture of shared learning, breaking down barriers, and creating valuable partnerships through the transformative power of art and recreational therapy.



Townsville Early Childhood Approach, Family and Disability Services

Safe and Sound: Finding opportunities to further embed safe and collaborative work practices.

The Townsville Early Childhood Approach team created a psychologically safe space and a neuro-affirming environment, where team members with diverse needs and perspectives can thrive.



Metro Hospitals Supply, Hospitals

In Their Shoes: Seeing the world through the eyes of the customer or community and the people we serve.

The Metro Supply team (Image 8) at The Wesley Hospital and St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital were recognised for their consistent, passionate, and vocal support of Project SEARCH and training young people with disabilities.



David Gale and Sonja Urban, Family and Disability Services

Go for Green: Finding opportunities to promote change within our organisation to reduce our footprint.

David Gale and Sonja Urban (Image 6) were instrumental in partnering with Allround Recycling and re-UP to promote sustainable and environmentally friendly practices in the retail industry.



Our Accountability



The UnitingCare Queensland Board

Positions held for the majority of the financial year are set out below. On 30 June 2024, Nigel Alexander retired from the Board. On 1 July 2024, Jim Demack commenced as Chair.



Nigel Alexander

Chair of the UnitingCare Queensland Board; Member of Digitally enabled Transformation Committee; Member of Governance, People and Culture Committee



Justine Cain

Member of Quality and Care Governance Committee, Member of Finance and Investment Committee



Jim Demack

Chair of Governance, People and Culture Committee; Member of Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee



Cheryl Herbert

Chair of Quality and Care Governance Committee; Member of the Digitally enabled Transformation Committee; Member of Health Strategy Working Party; Director ARCS Board



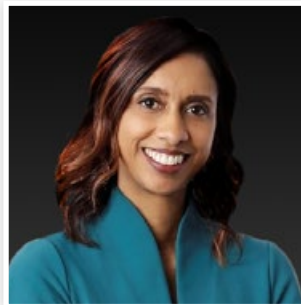
Rev Dr Adam McIntosh

Ex Officio Member, General Secretary of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod



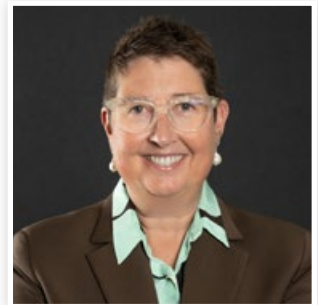
Rev Bruce Moore

Ex Officio Member, Moderator of the Uniting Church in Australia, Queensland Synod



Dr Mellissa Naidoo

Member of the Quality and Care Governance Committee; Member of Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee; Member of Health Strategy Working Party



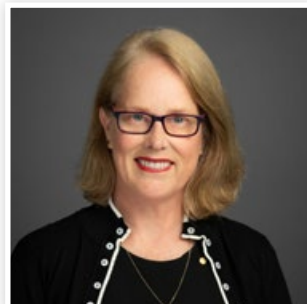
Alison Quinn

Chair of Finance and Investment Committee; Member of Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee



Dr Natalie Smith

Deputy Chair of the Board; Chair of the Digitally enabled Transformation Committee; Member of Governance, People and Culture Committee



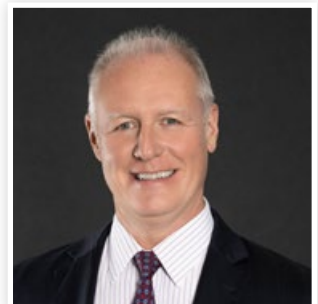
Andrea Staines OAM

Member of Finance and Investment Committee; Member of the Digitally enabled Transformation Committee; Member of Health Strategy Working Party



Susan Rix AM

Chair of Audit, Risk and Compliance Committee; Member of Finance and Investment Committee



Dr John Wakefield PSM

Chair of Health Strategy Working Party; Member of the Governance, People and Culture Committee; Member of the Quality and Care Governance Committee

Our Executive Leadership Team



Rev Dr Peter Armstrong
Director of Mission



Craig Barke
Chief Executive Officer



David Harper
Group Executive,
Hospitals



Susan Heath
Group Executive,
Digital and Technology



Suzanne Marlow
Group Executive, Governance



Shannon Richards
Group Executive,
People and Culture



Donna Shkalla
Group Executive, Family and
Disability Services



Cathy Thomas
Group Executive, Aged Care and
Community Services, and Executive
Director, ARRCs



Craig Wildermuth
Chief Financial Officer

Governing UnitingCare

Our Board is responsible for the stewardship, integrity, accountability, strategic direction, and effective risk management of UnitingCare Queensland, and acts to protect and enhance the interests of the Church as we work to serve people in communities in our shared mission.

The Board governs UnitingCare Queensland through a Governance framework by which it directs and holds UnitingCare Queensland to account. This framework is based on the requirements of UnitingCare's Constitution, governing documents of the Uniting Church in Australia including the Queensland Synod By-Laws, and relevant Commonwealth and State legislative requirements related to our aged care, health, and community services.

The functions of the Board are discharged as follows.

Authority

The Members of the Board are appointed by Synod in accordance with the requirements of the Queensland Synod By-Laws and UnitingCare Queensland Constitution.

In FY2023-24, the Synod Standing Committee acknowledged the retirements of Rev Andrew Gunton (Moderator) and Rev Heather den Houting (General Secretary). The UnitingCare Queensland Board and Management thank Heather and Andrew for their leadership and commitment and the care and services provided.

The Synod Standing Committee and UnitingCare Queensland Board welcomed Rev Bruce Moore as Moderator and Rev Dr Adam McIntosh as General Secretary. Bruce joined the Uniting Church Queensland Synod having previously served as Director of Mission as part of the Executive Team at UnitingCare Queensland. Adam joined the Uniting Church Queensland Synod having served as Associate Director of Mission with UnitingCare Queensland. Both bring a wealth of expertise and a strong understanding of UnitingCare's services.

On 30 June 2024, Nigel Alexander, who was appointed to the Board in May 2017 and has served as Chair since July 2018, retired from the Board. Nigel's dedication and expertise have been invaluable. Jim Demack, who has been a member of the Board since September 2021, is the new Chair as at 1 July 2024.

Accountability

The Chief Executive Officer is appointed by the UnitingCare Queensland Board, subject to the endorsement of Synod, and is subject to a performance review by the Board annually, at a minimum. The Chief Executive Officer, together with the Executive Leadership Team, recommends the strategic direction for Board approval and submits business and operational plans to achieve agreed strategic goals and outcomes.

The Chief Executive Officer is supported by UnitingCare Queensland's Executive Leadership Team.

Direction and control

The Board meets at least eight times each year in scheduled meetings, where it receives monthly, quarterly, or six-monthly financial and operational performance and risk and compliance reports from the Chief Executive Officer, the Chief Financial Officer, Group Executives, and the Board Committees.

Strategic planning days and Board development opportunities are also undertaken. In addition to formal meetings, Board members spend time reading and analysing Board papers and reports submitted by management and in informal discussions with management. The Board receives regular reports and presentations from senior executives and managers on employee wellbeing and safety, client and patient quality outcomes, implementation of the strategic plan, key policy decisions, stakeholder engagement, social justice and research activities and outcomes.

During FY2023-24, the Board met eight times in scheduled meetings. The Board also met in November 2023 for an offsite strategic planning session. An independent review of Board and Committee remuneration is undertaken on a triennial basis.

Stewardship and leadership

The Board has established committees to assist in fulfilling its responsibilities. Board members, apart from the ex officio members, are appointed to committees with reference to their skills and experience and the scope and responsibilities of the committee.

Board Committees

Committee	Purpose	Members	Attendees
Audit, Risk and Compliance	Assist the Board in fulfilling its financial reporting, risk management and internal control, internal and external audit process oversight, and compliance management oversight responsibilities.	Susan Rix AM (Chair) Alison Quinn Dr Mellissa Naidoo Jim Demack	Chief Executive Officer Chief Financial Officer Group Executive, Governance General Manager, Risk and Assurance
Governance, People and Culture	Assist the Board in fulfilling its governance, people and culture and mission responsibilities in relation to the governance framework, Board performance and composition, Board and Executive succession planning and remuneration, Governance, People and Culture and Mission strategic and governance risk oversight.	Jim Demack (Chair) Nigel Alexander Dr Natalie Smith Dr John Wakefield PSM Rev Dr Peter Armstrong (ex officio)	Chief Executive Officer Group Executive, Governance Group Executive, People and Culture Director of Mission
Finance and Investment	Assist the Board in fulfilling its overall financial performance and management responsibilities including to oversee and scrutinise the delivery of major finance and investment strategies and activities, and to provide guidance and recommendations on financial, treasury and investment matters to enable long term stewardship of resources and financial sustainability.	Alison Quinn (Chair) Andrea Staines OAM Susan Rix AM Justine Cain	Chief Executive Officer Chief Financial Officer Group Executive, Governance
Quality and Care Governance	Assist the Board in fulfilling its strategic and operational quality and care governance responsibilities, including providing advice to the Board on enhancement of customer led experience and outcomes; and establishment of evidence-based standards and practices to optimise service delivery, maximise competitive positioning, and respond to external industry changes.	Cheryl Herbert (Chair) Justine Cain Dr Mellissa Naidoo Dr John Wakefield PSM <i>External Members:</i> Prof Lesley Chenoweth Dr David Wood Dr Julie-Ann Phillips	Chief Executive Officer Group Executive, Governance <i>Group Executives:</i> • Aged Care and Community • Family and Disability • Hospitals
Digitally enabled Transformation Committee	A time limited Committee to assist the Board in fulfilling its strategic and high-level operational responsibilities in the investments being made in digitally enabled transformation.	Dr Natalie Smith (Chair) Nigel Alexander Cheryl Herbert Andrea Staines OAM <i>External Members:</i> Dr Kasia Bail Dr Clair Sullivan	Chief Executive Officer Group Executive, Governance Group Executive Digital and Technology
Health Strategy Working Party	A time limited Working Party to assist the Board to review and work with UnitingCare Health on key performance (financial and non-financial) challenges and strategies. Explore and provide advice to the Board on UnitingCare Health's strategy in keeping with the Mission and strategic direction of UnitingCare.	Dr John Wakefield PSM (Chair) Andrea Staines OAM Dr Mellissa Naidoo Cheryl Herbert	Chief Executive Officer Group Executive, Governance Group Executive, Hospitals COO Hospitals

These Committees and Working Party support the Board by effectively and efficiently dealing with complex or specialised issues. This structure creates an environment of transparency and accountability for the Board and the Executive Leadership Team to drive continuous improvements and deliver exceptional, values-based care.

Subsidiary-like Boards

Australian Regional and Remote Community Services Board

The role of the Australian Regional and Remote Community Services Ltd (ARRCS) Board is to approve the strategic direction of ARRCS, guide and monitor the management of ARRCS in achieving its strategic plans, in care and service delivery and to oversee good governance practice.

The ARRCS Board governs in consideration of the interests of the Church and other stakeholders, including our clients, employees, volunteers, and the wider community.

The ARRCS Board reports to the UnitingCare Queensland Board on matters reserved by the Board as the delegated Member, with the UnitingCare Queensland Board appointing the Directors.

The ARRCS Directors are:

Craig Barke (Chair)	Stephanie Harvey
Cheryl Herbert	Judith Oliver
Heather Watson	Brian Wyborn
Kevin Wrigley	Geoffrey Batkin

On 30 June 2024, Craig Barke stepped down from the position of Chair, and Brian Wyborn was appointed. Craig will remain on the ARRCS Board for the rest of the calendar year to ensure a smooth transition. In addition, on 30 June 2024, Heather Watson retired from the Board. The UnitingCare Queensland Board, ARRCS Board and Management thank Heather and Craig for their expertise and leadership.

The ARRCS annual accounts are audited by the UnitingCare Queensland auditors and are consolidated in the UnitingCare Queensland annual accounts.

Leap in! Australia Ltd

Leap in! Australia Ltd (Leap in!) was a joint venture between UnitingCare Queensland and UnitingCare NSW-ACT during FY24. It is focused on delivering a digital platform to help clients with a disability navigate the complexity of service providers and availability and plan coordination once NDIS approved plans are in place.

During FY2023-24, Leap in!* continued to grow its support and services for clients with a focus on progressing key activities to prepare for sale of the business. Each Member appointed up to two Directors to Leap in! Australia, with Justine Cain the Member-appointed Director for UnitingCare Queensland.

Board attendance and fees

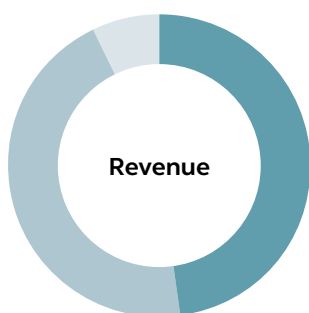
	Board		Audit, Risk & Compliance Committee		Governance, People & Culture Committee		Finance & Investment Committee		Quality & Care Governance Committee		Digitally enabled Transformation Committee		Health Strategy Working Party		Fees
	Eligible to attend	Attended	Eligible to attend	Attended	Eligible to attend	Attended	Eligible to attend	Attended	Eligible to attend	Attended	Eligible to attend	Attended	Eligible to attend	Attended	
Nigel Alexander (Chair)	8	8			4	4					6	5			\$132,562.27
Andrea Staines OAM	8	8					7	5			6	6	2	2	\$66,280.74
Cheryl Herbert	8	7							6	5	6	6	2	2	\$78,014.03
Justine Cain	8	7					7	5	6	6					\$66,280.74
Alison Quinn	8	6	4	4			7	7							\$78,014.03
Jim Demack	8	8	4	4	4	3									\$78,051.83
Dr Natalie Smith	8	7			4	4					6	5			\$78,213.60
Susan Rix AM	8	7	4	4			7	7							\$78,531.37
Dr John Wakefield PSM	8	7			4	3			6	3			2	1	\$75,135.43
Dr Mellissa Naidoo	8	7	4	4					6	6			2	2	\$66,280.74
Ex-officio members															
Rev Heather den Houting	2	1													
Rev Andrew Gunton	2	1													
Rev Dr Adam McIntosh	5	5													
Rev Bruce Moore	7	5													
Rev Dr Peter Armstrong	7	6			4	4									
External Committee Members															
Prof Lesley Chenoweth									6	4					\$10,605.51
Dr David Wood									6	3					\$10,605.51
Dr Julie-Ann Phillips									6	5					\$10,605.51
Dr Kasia Bail											6	4			\$10,605.51
Dr Clair Sullivan											6	5			\$10,605.51

Our financial highlights

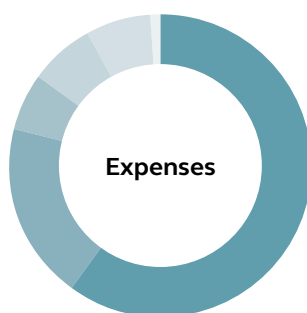


Income Statement

	Year ended 30 June 2024 \$'000	Year ended 30 June 2023 \$'000
Revenue		
Governments	1,035,510	790,783
Patients, clients and residents	987,519	997,364
Other	155,011	176,066
<i>Total revenue</i>	<i>2,178,040</i>	<i>1,964,213</i>
Expenses		
Salaries and employees	-1,370,633	-1,200,375
Supplies and services	-439,965	-387,409
Depreciation and amortisation	-130,937	-119,707
Property	-154,198	-144,198
Other	-151,212	-149,270
Finance Costs	-28,848	-20,950
<i>Total</i>	<i>-2,275,793</i>	<i>-2,021,909</i>
Total net surplus/(deficit)	-97,753	-57,696
Other comprehensive income	2,819	3,628
Total comprehensive surplus/(loss)	-94,934	-54,068



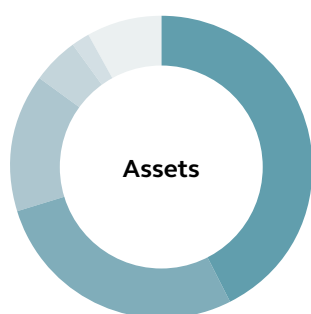
- 48% Governments
- 45% Patients, clients and residents
- 7% Other sources



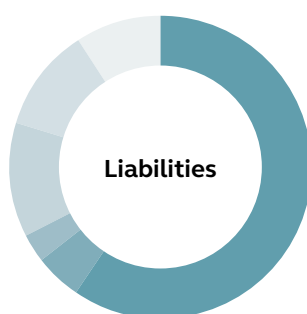
- 60% Salaries and employee
- 19% Supplies and services
- 6% Depreciation and amortisation
- 7% Property
- 7% Other
- 1% Finance costs

Balance Sheet

	Year ended 30 June 2024 \$'000	Year ended 30 June 2023 \$'000
Assets		
Property, plant and equipment	1,049,046	1,053,172
Investment properties	670,355	636,227
Cash and cash equivalents	362,466	360,234
Trade and other receivables	117,624	120,090
Intangible assets	36,729	26,878
Other	191,234	147,205
<i>Total assets</i>	<i>2,427,454</i>	<i>2,343,806</i>
Liabilities		
Ingoing contributions and accommodation bonds	944,326	882,435
Lease liabilities	82,031	39,432
Borrowings	55,000	-
Employee benefits	192,803	187,403
Trade and other payables	173,711	180,279
Other	143,944	123,684
<i>Total liabilities</i>	<i>1,591,815</i>	<i>1,413,233</i>
Total funds	835,639	930,573



- 43% Property, plant and equipment
- 28% Investment properties
- 15% Cash and cash equivalent
- 5% Trade and other receivables
- 2% Intangible assets
- 8% Other



- 59% Ingoing contributions and accommodation bonds
- 5% Lease liabilities
- 3% Borrowings
- 12% Employee benefits
- 11% Trade and other payables
- 9% Other

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unitingcareqld.com.au



Proudly representing

BlueCare | Lifeline | ARRCs | The Wesley Hospital | Buderim Private Hospital
St Stephen's Hospital | St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital