



SQRH
Southern Queensland
Rural Health

2018

YEAR IN REVIEW



Australian Government

A COMMONWEALTH-FUNDED UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF RURAL HEALTH



THE UNIVERSITY
OF QUEENSLAND
AUSTRALIA



UNIVERSITY
OF SOUTHERN
QUEENSLAND

Darling Downs
Health

A COLLABORATION BETWEEN:

South West
Hospital and Health Service



Queensland
Government

A UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT OF RURAL HEALTH

Southern Queensland Rural Health (SQRH) has been established to support and strengthen an enduring high quality, highly skilled health workforce in regional, rural and remote Southern Queensland. Specifically, our focus is supporting nursing, midwifery, allied health students and rural health professionals as well as increasing rural health training opportunities.

A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR RURAL HEALTH IN SOUTHERN QUEENSLAND

Established in late 2017, SQRH is a Commonwealth-funded collaboration between the University of Queensland, University of Southern Queensland, Darling Downs Health and South West Hospital and Health Service.

Working closely with our rural communities, stakeholders, students and health providers, we are committed to engaging and educating a high quality and highly skilled rural health workforce across regional, rural and remote Southern Queensland.

SQRH operates from two main training sites – Toowoomba on the Darling Downs and Charleville in the far South West of Queensland, as well as servicing various spoke sites to provide education and support to rural health professionals and exceptional rural training for nursing, midwifery and allied health students.

HEALTHY COMMUNITIES

We focus on developing the capability of the rural health workforce and proactively working in collaboration with our regional, rural and remote stakeholders to address rural health workforce shortages in Southern Queensland. While this is a large and complex issue, SQRH's key priority is to encourage nursing, midwifery and allied health students to consider rural practice and provide support to ensure this experience is rich and rewarding.

We do this by:

- Working with Darling Downs Health, South West Hospital and Health Service and other local health providers, to deliver effective, high quality rural training experiences for nursing, midwifery and allied health students.
- Improving student recruitment in regional, rural and remote Southern Queensland.
- Providing regional leadership in developing innovative training solutions for rural health professionals.



- Improving the capability for health students and staff in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.
- Maintaining and progressing an evidence base and the rural health research agenda.

OUR KEY PRIORITIES

SQRH has been funded to work across 7 key priority areas.

- Deliver effective rural training experiences for allied health, nursing and midwifery students (prior to gaining professional registration).
- Ensure rural training experiences are of a high quality.
- Develop processes to improve rural student recruitment.
- Engage with the local community to support the delivery of training to students.
- Maintain and progress an evidence base and the rural health research agenda.
- Support improvements in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.
- Provide regional leadership in developing innovative training solutions to address rural workforce recruitment and retention.



CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Derek Tuffield OAM

As a passionate advocate for Darling Downs and South West Queensland communities it has been an absolute privilege to chair the SQRH Advisory Board during 2018.

This document reminds me how far we have come in the past twelve months and the incredible support and engagement from rural health professionals, healthcare providers, the three levels of government and communities across Southern Queensland.

Bringing together the representatives from our four partners, University of Queensland, University of Southern Queensland, Darling Downs Health and the South West Health Hospital Service for monthly Advisory Board meetings, has been productive and has built a foundation for ongoing cooperation. Each of the Board members has a wealth of experience and insight and we have been united in our efforts to support strategies that bring immediate effect, as well as long term goals that help build a sustainable rural health workforce.

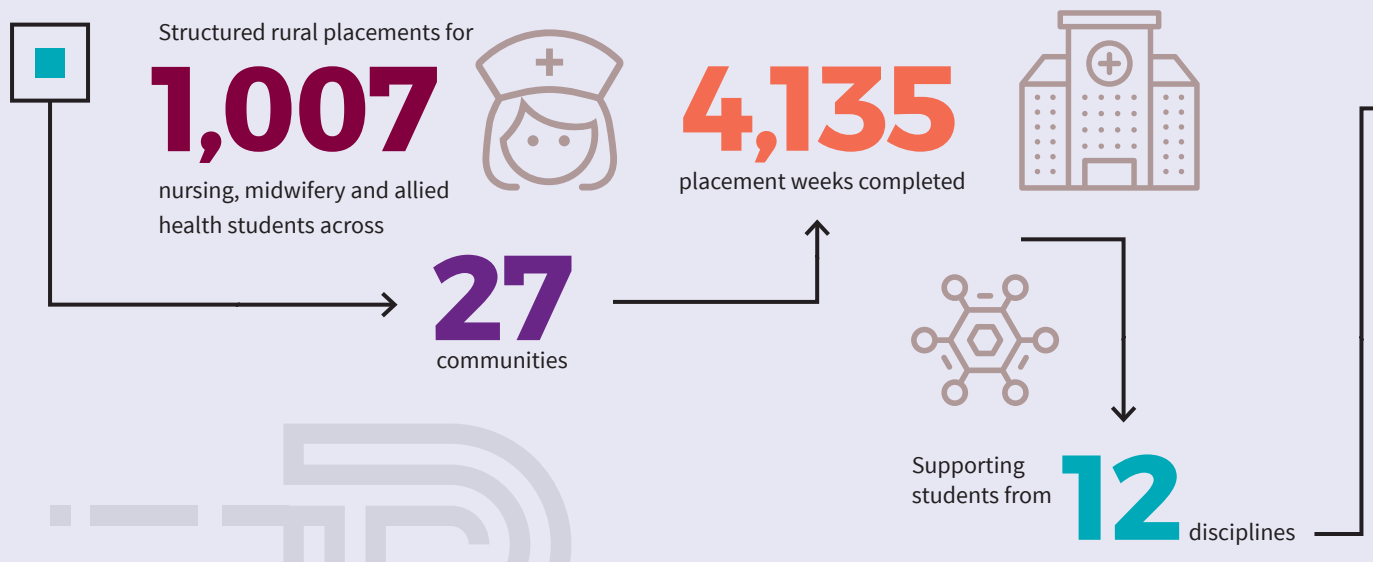
During the past year I have really valued our Board engagement activities in Toowoomba and Charleville as well

as getting to know the SQRH team as it builds and grows.

Increasing the number of placement weeks has been a major win for SQRH and the initiatives taken to broaden and diversify student experiences has brought dividends as students see the appeal of living and working in a rural community.

Delivering high quality health care in these rural and remote parts of Southern Queensland has its challenges however true collaboration is the key driver to bringing improvements. At SQRH we have seen the amazing resilience of rural communities and we are excited to work with stakeholders on innovative programs that will develop the rural health workforce and enhance patient outcomes.

I eagerly look forward to 2019 and taking SQRH forward!



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Associate Professor Geoff Argus



As a new University Department of Rural Health (UDRH), 2018 was a significant year for the establishment of Southern Queensland Rural Health (SQRH). We are unique in that we are the only UDRH in the country that exists as a formal collaboration between two universities and two public health services. The strength of this collaboration has allowed us to establish ourselves rapidly and ensure that the learning opportunities and outcomes for nursing, midwifery and allied health students pursuing careers in rural health are maximised. Our geographical footprint spans an area over 400,000 square kilometres, covering 11 Regional Councils across vastly diverse communities and landscapes.

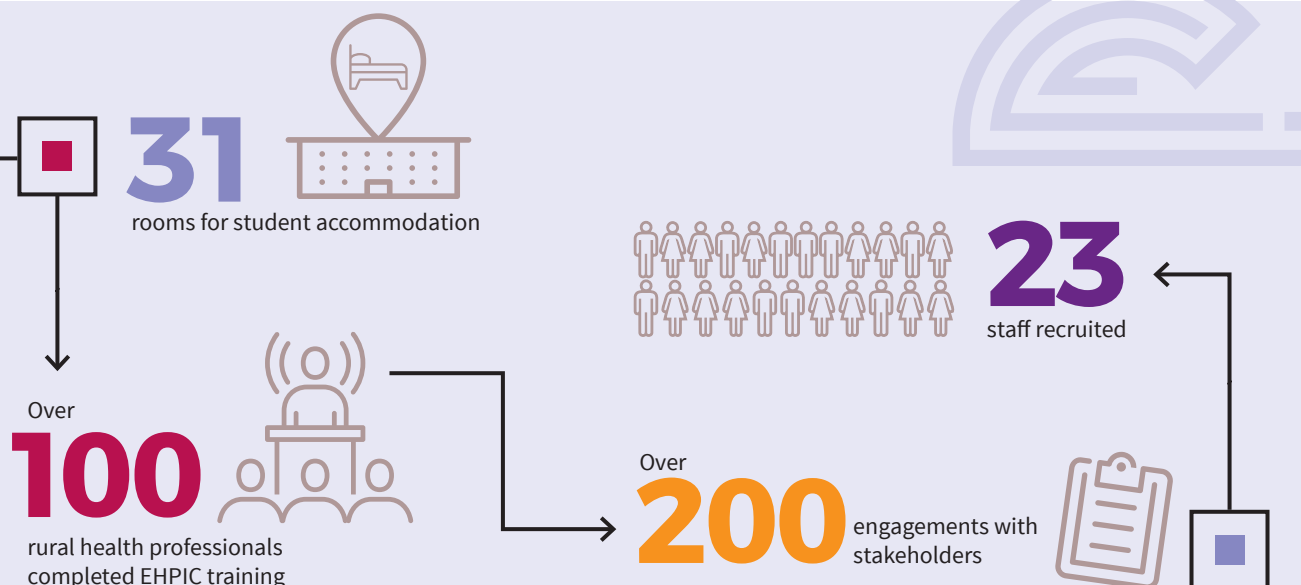
There has been an enormous amount of goodwill from stakeholders across the region who see the value in what SQRH has been funded to achieve. Through our consortium we delivered clinical placements to over 1,000 students in 27 communities across our footprint. These positive clinical and community experiences for students are essential in developing the rural health workforce of the future.

The current year in review document highlights some of the key activities that SQRH has engaged in but cannot do justice to the enormous amount of work that our dedicated staff do on a daily basis to address the health, education and workforce challenges faced by rural communities across our region. Some key highlights are:

- Establishing main training sites in Toowoomba and Charleville
- Recruitment of 23 staff members

- Securing student accommodation in five rural communities resulting in 31 extra rooms for students on rural clinical placement
- Engagement with multiple stakeholders across the region including students, local councils and health service providers across various communication platforms
- Hosting the University of Toronto in Toowoomba and Roma to deliver world class workshops on Interprofessional Education and Collaboration to over 100 rural health professionals
- Establishing the Southern Queensland Interprofessional Education Community of Practice
- Developing and delivering student workshops on Interprofessional Collaboration
- Collaboration activities with the Royal Flying Doctor Service, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, UQ Rural Clinical School, Queensland Rural Medical Education, Health Workforce Queensland, Darling Downs and West Moreton Primary Health Network and Western Queensland Primary Health Network

We are looking forward with great enthusiasm to the opportunities that 2019 will bring, particularly in strengthening and formalising our relationships with rural health stakeholders and expanding supports for students across the region.



BOARD MEMBER REPORTS



PROFESSOR BRUCE ABERNETHY

**Executive Dean,
Faculty of Health and
Behavioural Sciences,
University of Queensland**



As this publication reveals, 2018 has been an extraordinarily busy and successful year for SQRH. Within the space of 12 months a functioning multi-organisational entity has been established; skilled staff have been recruited and inducted; transparent operational processes have been put in place; headquarters and multiple clinic training sites have been established; suitable accommodation for students has been secured in many places; game-changing inter-professional education and learning experiences for clinical educators have been developed; strong inter-organisational and community partnerships have been built; and, most critically, the clinical placement opportunities for nursing, midwifery and allied health students throughout the Darling Downs and South Western Queensland have been enhanced.

This has been an exceptional achievement. The University of Queensland, as the holder of the University Department of Rural Health contract with the Commonwealth and as one of four core members in the SQRH consortium, is delighted to have seen new opportunities emerging through SQRH for our students in professions such as physiotherapy, occupational therapy, nursing, dietetics, clinical exercise physiology, psychology, social work, midwifery and speech therapy to gain rural and regional training experience.

We are confident that these excellent clinical placement experiences will whet the students' appetites for continuing engagement in the region as graduates.

We value enormously our partnership with Darling Downs Health, South West Hospital and Health Service and the University of Southern Queensland in this collaboration (as well as the relationships being forged with the many other groups that support this important initiative), and we look forward to the continued development of the breadth and depth of SQRH's activities in 2019.



PROFESSOR GLEN COLEMAN

**Executive Dean,
Faculty of Health,
Engineering and Science,
University of Southern
Queensland**



USQ has been very pleased with SQRH's progress during its first year of operations. There have been significant achievements in tackling the incredibly complex area of providing rural placements for students in nursing, midwifery and allied health disciplines and building their awareness of the opportunities such placements provide for their own personal and career development.

Improving accommodation support for such students has been an early win for SQRH, and nursing, midwifery and allied health students now have access to suitable, inexpensive accommodation at five sites across the Darling Downs and South West.

SQRH has also provided a framework that will provide clarity and more efficient processes around placement opportunities and their management; this will lead to more effective use of the placements available at DDH and SWHHS.

Perhaps most importantly, SQRH has led to a reinvigoration of relationships between USQ and our three SQRH partners at multiple levels in each organisation – the goodwill and energy created by the SQRH initiative has provided the stimulus for many exciting discussions about opportunities for improved collaboration leading to better training of health students and ultimately I trust improved delivery of health services across the region.

Another highlight for USQ has been SQRH's leadership in developing thinking around how we build awareness and competence in interprofessional practice among our health students. Interprofessional Practice Workshops involving staff from all four SQRH partners have provided a great foundation from which we are re-thinking how we build these skills across all of our health programs. Associate Professor Amy Mullens is leading a USQ working group developing strategies to address this issue.



Darling Downs
Health

ANNETTE SCOTT

**Executive Director,
Allied Health,
Darling Downs Health**



DDH workforce development and clinical education support staff worked closely with Clinical Educators and Interprofessional Education Coordinators from SQRH to identify opportunities to implement additional student clinical placements as well as plan and implement interprofessional workshops for allied health and nursing students on placement. In addition, the Cunningham Centre has continued to develop the role of Interprofessional Coordinator to support implementation and advancement of interprofessional collaboration (IPC) across the clinical services in DDH, and to further support this implementation medical, nursing and allied health staff were supported to attend the SQRH hosted 'Educating Health Professionals in Interprofessional Care: Advancing the Future of Healthcare through Interprofessional Learning' training delivered by the University of Toronto.

The membership of DDHIRC includes St Andrews private hospital, St Vincent's private hospital, UQ rural clinical school, SQRH, USQ, Griffith University and Darling Downs West Moreton Primary Health Network. As part of this initiative, SQRH was involved in the organisation and delivery of a showcase of local rural health research occurring across the Darling Downs region in late 2018.

In September 2018, with the support of SQRH, the trial of the first Bariatric Outpatient Service (BOS) model was implemented at Baillie Henderson Hospital campus providing opportunity for physiotherapy students to experience a clinical placement within this new service model. Evaluation of the service model will inform the evolution of the model, potential additional BOS related service models and opportunity for additional student activity.

DDH also welcomed the opportunity to collaborate and plan with SQRH for the establishment of interprofessional student-led health and wellness clinics on the old Baillie Henderson hospital campus. This will provide students and staff of SQRH close proximity to the Tuke Annexe Building where SQRH Toowoomba office will be located from mid 2019 as well as increase the capacity for student placements whilst providing important health services to the community.

2018 was an exciting and fulfilling year for Darling Downs Health (DDH) as it worked with SQRH consortium partners to implement a range of initiatives that further advanced the clinical education and training offered in our region.

In November 2018 a range of clinical staff with an interest in clinical education, as well as clinical education and training staff from DDH participated in the launch of the Southern Queensland IPE Community of Practice (COP). The COP brings together health professionals from nursing and allied health professions to discuss methods to enhance interprofessional collaboration and practice, particularly in relation to student education.

In 2018 DDH also welcomed SQRH as a member of the Darling Downs Health Innovation and Research Committee (DDHIRC). The DDHIRC meets regularly to identify rural health innovations, explore collaborative rural health research opportunities and to strengthen collaborative processes in research grant applications.



BOARD MEMBER REPORTS CONTINUED



LINDA PATAT

Chief Executive, South West Hospital and Health Service

South West Hospital and Health Service and SQRH are inspiring change to be part of something bigger and brighter. Together, we are evolving the way health care education is delivered, so that our South West Queensland communities are cared for by a purposeful, high quality and highly skilled rural health workforce today and into the future.



Driven by innovation, in 2018 we committed to providing students with real-world rural and remote health care experience. The South West HHS team recognises the value in student placement and supervision and embraces the opportunity to grow tomorrow's rural health innovators, leaders and carers.

Notable achievements for 2018 included:

- Securing a permanent SQRH location in Charleville for an office and training centre to support the training of nursing, midwifery and allied health students;
- Tailoring targeted support for our students undertaking placement in rural and remote locations. We hold many

activities where students and professionals from a range of health disciplines learn with, from and about each other's professions to improve interprofessional collaboration, communication and patient outcomes;

- In November 2018, an International team from the University of Toronto's Centre for Interprofessional Education came to Roma to conduct a three-day intensive workshop for 50 health professionals on advancing the future of healthcare through interprofessional learning. The workshop was attended by key clinical and academic staff from South West HHS, Darling Downs Health, the University of Queensland, University of Southern Queensland, Royal Flying Doctor Service, Allied Health Professions Office of Queensland, Office of the Chief Nurse and Midwifery Officer and the Queensland Ambulance Service;
- Creating connections and alliances between SQRH and our other health care partners and emergency services in South West Queensland to develop creative and effective rural recruitment and retention opportunities.

We are proud of what we have been able to achieve with SQRH and are excited for a future where nursing, midwifery and allied health students decide to make a difference in the lives of people living in rural and remote areas, and grow the next generation of healthcare workers, with a passion and commitment to living and working, and making a difference, in the bush.



SO MANY GREAT REASONS TO 'GO RURAL'

The very nature of rural healthcare means that students will be exposed to a hugely diverse range of experiences during their rural clinical placement. Couple this with interprofessional learning and development and it is a very exciting time to fully experience the challenges and rewards of rural healthcare delivery.

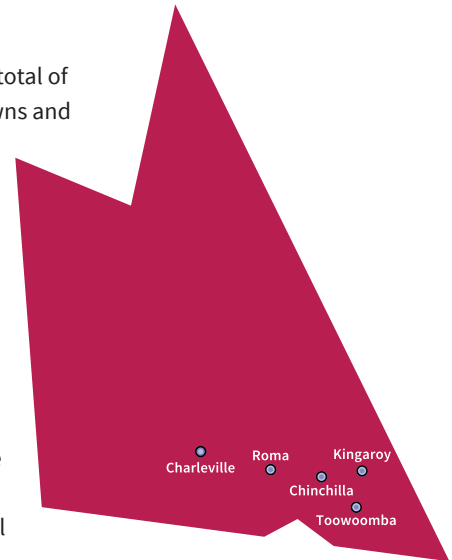
SQRH actively encourages and supports UQ and USQ students studying nursing, midwifery, physiotherapy, clinical exercise physiology, nutrition and dietetics, speech pathology, occupational therapy, pharmacy, psychology, social work and audiology, to “go rural” for clinical placements.

While UQ and USQ students are actively encouraged, nursing, midwifery and allied health students from any Australian university are supported by SQRH with accommodation, travel costs and additional support should they choose to undertake clinical placement with public and private health services and healthcare organisations across the Darling Downs and South West Queensland.

STUDENT ACCOMMODATION

SQRH has secured student accommodation at Toowoomba, Chinchilla, Kingaroy, Roma and Charleville.

The properties, which include a total of 31 rooms across the Darling Downs and South West regions as well as access to the University of Southern Queensland residential college, have been furnished comfortably to contemporary standards. All accommodation is located close to hospitals and health services. The accommodation provides another great incentive for nursing, midwifery and allied health students to choose a rural or remote placement.



RURAL HEALTH CLUB WEEKEND

SQRH joined with Health Workforce Queensland and four Queensland Rural Health Clubs during October to present the Joint Rural Health Club weekend (JRHCW) in Stanthorpe. A total of 40 nursing, allied health, medical and dental students from various universities were exposed to a vast range of topics including paramedicine, obstetrics, dental, suturing and allied health skills.

If students experience the richness of rural community life, and thoroughly enjoy the experience on both a personal and professional level, they will be more likely to return to rural communities as health professionals when they have completed their studies. Through enriching rural and remote placements, it is anticipated students will share positive experiences with their peers who in turn will be motivated to take up rural placement. In this way SQRH helps grow and sustain rural placement opportunities across the Darling Downs and South West regions.

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR GEOFF ARGUS – DIRECTOR SQRH



HIGH QUALITY TRAINING FOR BETTER HEALTH OUTCOMES

The nature of rural health practice is diverse with clinicians working with a broad range of health conditions and providing care across the lifespan.

Rural placement experiences for students are enriched through diversity in cases due to the nature of delivering healthcare in regional, rural and remote communities. Students on rural placement get to experience the breadth and depth of clinical practice.

We are committed to developing the emerging health workforce in the most contemporary evidence-based models of healthcare delivery to ensure students from our partner universities graduate with an understanding of excellence in healthcare. This education is further enhanced through quality clinical placements, effective clinical governance and high standard supervision.

Initiatives such as these will, over time, improve access to high quality healthcare in regional, rural and remote communities.

INTERPROFESSIONAL COLLABORATIVE EDUCATION AND PRACTICE

Interprofessional care/collaboration or IPC occurs when multiple health workers from different professional backgrounds provide comprehensive health services by working with patients, their families, carers and communities to deliver the highest quality of care across settings.

SQRH hosted University of Toronto Centre for Interprofessional Education representatives to deliver two three day intensive workshops in Roma and Toowoomba during November. At the Educating Health Professionals in Interprofessional Care (EHPIC) workshops, participants included doctors, nurses midwives, allied health professionals, clinical educators, emergency services personnel and health administrators. Over 100 rural health professionals completed the training with many aiming to implement Interprofessional Practice concepts into their workplaces.

The Centre for Interprofessional Education team gave an invaluable insight into the benefits and enhanced patient outcomes when there is consistent and integrated implementation of interprofessional care/collaboration.



↑ Representatives from the University of Toronto, University of Queensland, University of Southern Queensland, South West Hospital and Health Service, Allied Health Professions' Office of Queensland and SQRH at the three intensive days of EHPIC training at Roma.

MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID TRAINING

In late June, SQRH provided Mental Health First Aid training to a group of first year nursing and psychology students from USQ. The students eagerly took up the opportunity to add valuable skills to their toolkit, completing an online study component prior to undertaking the face-to-face module at the SQRH Toowoomba office. Given the severe impact of drought on numerous communities throughout Southern Queensland, students from all health disciplines should have skills and knowledge to assist with rural mental health issues.

TRAINING SUPERVISORS

Health staff from the South Burnett gained a number of skills from attending an SQRH Clinical Supervisors workshop.

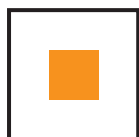
Held at Kingaroy Hospital in June, the workshop focused on providing effective feedback to students on clinical placements, as well as identifying barriers to communication and implementing models to assist with difficult conversations.

STUDENT INTERPROFESSIONAL EDUCATION SESSIONS

A total of 18 nursing, midwifery and allied health students participated in a series of interprofessional sessions delivered by SQRH Clinical Educators during October.

With sessions held at Toowoomba Hospital and Charleville Hospital, students were able to understand the roles of other professions in their healthcare teams, gain a more thorough knowledge of the expertise each profession brings to patient care, skills in constructive communication and further insight into patient-centred care.

Feedback about the sessions was very positive with students reporting the patient scenarios and interactive learning components as critical to their learning in Interprofessional Education.



↑ Clinical Educator Nicola Cotter delivers supervisor training at Kingaroy Hospital.



RURAL HEALTH PRACTITIONER - A GREAT CAREER CHOICE!

There are so many great reasons to consider nursing, midwifery or allied health as a career. SQRH collaborated in targeted activities to support school student selection to pursue rural health studies.

ASPIRE TO HEALTH PROGRAM COLLABORATION

Plastering, suturing, rehabilitation scenarios and vehicle extraction were just a few of the skills on show for high school students at a series of “Aspire2health” days at Toowoomba, Warwick, Stanthorpe, Kingaroy and Dalby in September.

Designed to show high school students possible career pathways in medicine, nursing, or allied health, the seminars were initiated by Griffith University through Queensland Rural Medical Education and organised in collaboration with the UQ Rural Clinical School, Department of Education and Training, USQ and SQRH.

Students from various schools across Toowoomba, Southern Downs, South Burnett and Western Downs thoroughly enjoyed their respective events and feedback centred around the variety of career options, the feeling of “real life scenario” during simulations and the learning from one-on-one conversations with rural health professionals.

RURAL ACCESS SCHEME

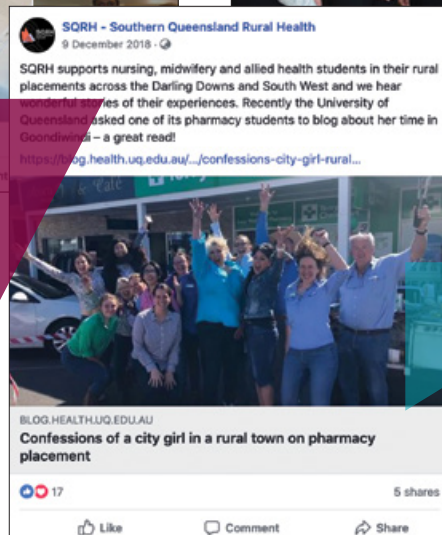
The Rural Access Scheme has been introduced at the University of Queensland Faculty of Health and Behavioural Sciences to encourage students from a rural background to pursue a career in health.



STRATEGIC MEDIA CAMPAIGN

As part of the SQRH Communications, Marketing and Media Plan, a social media campaign was launched in April and sought to engage with health professionals, stakeholders and communities. With active posting on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and LinkedIn, SQRH has increased its community profile and engaged with audiences willing to interact by commenting and sharing.

SQRH has also worked with local electronic and print media outlets to keep communities informed of major achievements and milestones. Rural communities rely on local media as a trusted source of news and, with regular SQRH stories gaining coverage, community organisations embrace the opportunity to welcome health students.



SOLUTION ORIENTED

In addition to engaging with professional health networks, SQRH has been working collaboratively with local councils, and community organisations to help identify ways to embrace their future health workforce and ensure that students receive a well-rounded and high-quality community experience, giving plentiful opportunities to integrate into community life.

INTERPROFESSIONAL COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE LAUNCH

In an effort to build a strong foundation for local Interprofessional Education and Interprofessional Care, SQRH launched a formal Interprofessional Community of Practice in November 2018.



Communities of Practice provide a valuable opportunity to create a learning community around an area of interest or practice, to share and develop practice and build personal and professional knowledge and expertise. Representatives from the University of Queensland, University of Southern Queensland, Darling Downs Health, South West Hospital and Health Service, Queensland Health plus others are active participants in the CoP and the broad and varied expertise in the group will be invaluable.

It is expected that real and tangible outcomes will flow from the momentum gained in growing knowledge, building peer support and promoting interprofessional education and training.

SQRH ENGAGEMENT AND CONNECTION TO COMMUNITIES

SQRH has actively engaged with local councils and local community organisations across the Darling Downs and South West region and established that there is a great deal of goodwill and genuine desire to further develop the rural health workforce across public health services, private health services and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations.

The SQRH team has identified that numerous key stakeholders are working in different ways to improve rural and remote health professional recruitment and retention and has sought to build a variety of collaborations to ensure efforts are co-ordinated for enhanced outcomes.

The SQRH team has presented information to:

- Statewide Rural and Remote Health Forum
- Statewide Allied Health Education Forum
- Darling Downs Health Senior Nurses' Forum
- Darling Downs Health Consumer and Carer Council
- Health Workforce Queensland
- Darling Downs West Moreton Primary Health Network
- Western Queensland Primary Health Network
- Charleville and Western Areas Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health (CWAATSICH)
- Cunnamulla Aboriginal Corporate for Health (CACH)
- Goondir Health Services
- Royal Flying Doctor Service
- Heart of Australia
- Carbal Medical Services
- Goolburri Aboriginal Health Advancement
- Cherbourg Regional Aboriginal and Islander Community Controlled Health Services (CRAICCHS)

Following these presentations, the SQRH team has maintained contact, gaining traction on joint initiatives and working toward more formal agreements where required. The extensive community engagement has provided an excellent foundation to build new initiatives and projects in 2019.

We are proud to work in association with our stakeholders and affiliate organisations:

- Griffith University
- Darling Downs West Moreton Primary Health Network
- Western Queensland Primary Health Network
- Cunnamulla Aboriginal Corporation for Health (CACH)
- Carbal Medical Services
- Cherbourg Regional Aboriginal and Islander Community Controlled Health Services (CRAICCHS)
- Charleville and Western Areas Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Community Health (CWAATSICH)
- Goolburri Aboriginal Health Advancement
- Goondir Health Services
- West Moreton Health



↑ Spreading the word about SQRH at the Darling Downs Health NAIDOC Week celebrations.



↑ Making the most of NAIDOC Week at Charleville are representatives from SQRH, CWAATSICH, nursing students, SWHHS and Charleville Hospital staff.



↑ SQRH attends Association of Queensland Nursing and Midwifery Leaders Conference.



↑ SQRH met with Balonne Shire Council.



↑ The Services for Allied Rural and Remote Allied Health (SARRAH) National Conference, held in Darwin, attracted delegates from across Australia along with SQRH clinical educators Nicola Cotter and Jayne Kirkpatrick. SQRH funded the travel, accommodation and conference registrations for two USQ students, Catherine Wise and Laura Healy.



↑ SQRH and UQ Rural Clinical School visiting the Healthy Ageing Program office in Charleville.

CHARLEVILLE



TOOWOOMBA



SQRH.com.au

