



2024 | 2025 ANNUAL REPORT

phn NORTHERN TERRITORY
An Australian Government Initiative

RURAL Workforce AGENCY NT





ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Northern Territory PHN acknowledges the Traditional Owners of the country on which we work and live, and recognises their continuing connection to land, waters and community. We pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging, and to their cultures.

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CEO AND BOARD CHAIR MESSAGE

The 2024–25 financial year marked a significant milestone for Northern Territory Primary Health Network (NT PHN) as we celebrated our 10-year anniversary. This anniversary reflects a decade of shared effort and leadership by communities, health services, governments and stakeholders working to achieve better health outcomes for all Territorians.

It has also been a year of change and renewal at NT PHN. We acknowledge the contribution of outgoing CEO Gill Yearsley and long-serving Board Chair John Rawnsley, whose leadership has helped shape the organisation over many years. We welcomed David Blair as Board Chair and Paul Connolly as CEO, along with 4 new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander directors, creating a majority First Nations-led Board. These changes strengthen our commitment to cultural safety, equity and inclusive leadership.

Throughout the year, many challenges have continued, particularly in addressing health workforce shortages, service access in remote communities and the growing complexity of care. Yet, these challenges have also highlighted the strength of our partnerships. Together with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, primary care providers, and government partners, we supported initiatives that expanded culturally safe services, supported general practice sustainability and advanced work in mental health, alcohol and other drugs and healthy ageing.



We recognise that progress is collective. The achievements of this year are the result of the leadership, knowledge and commitment of our partners and communities.

As we look ahead, NT PHN remains focused on supporting local leadership, enabling innovation and working in genuine partnership to build a stronger, more connected and more equitable primary health care system. We extend our sincere thanks to our staff, partners and communities for their ongoing trust and collaboration.

David Blair
Board Chair

Paul Connolly
Chief Executive Officer (CEO)



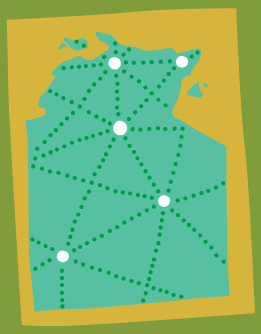


WHO WE ARE

Northern Territory Primary Health Network (NT PHN) commissions primary health services and strengthens the Northern Territory's health workforce.

Our vision is for a culturally safe, inclusive, person-centred and integrated health care system that helps Territorians thrive.

OUR REACH



Services commissioned across
TOP END, BIG RIVERS, CENTRAL AUSTRALIA, BARKLY AND **EAST ARNHEM REGIONS**

PARTNERSHIPS
with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, NT Health and local NGOs

Regional offices in
DARWIN, KATHERINE AND **ALICE SPRINGS**
supporting place-based delivery

2024-25 AT A GLANCE

HEALTH COMMISSIONING AND PROGRAMS



$82M INVESTED
to improve the health of Territorians

222 COMMISSIONED SERVICES





Focus areas included
MENTAL HEALTH, CHRONIC CONDITIONS, AGED CARE, AND **ABORIGINAL HEALTH**

Continued integration of
CULTURALLY SAFE, PERSON-CENTRED
models of care



OUR PEOPLE



97 STAFF
across the NT



61%
of management roles are held by
WOMEN



A new
INNOVATE RAP WAS LAUNCHED,
committing to increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in leadership and meaningful employment opportunities at NT PHN.



Continued professional development investment in
LEADERSHIP, CULTURAL SAFETY, AND **TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICES**

WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT

257
HEALTH PROFESSIONALS
supported with recruitment and relocation to the NT





180
PRACTICE ENGAGEMENTS
delivered through tailored support and collaboration

OVER
1,500
PARTICIPANTS
attended NT PHN professional development events





OVER
$2M
invested in primary healthcare workforce grants for professional development



HEALTH WORKFORCE NEEDS ASSESSMENT 2025

identified key priorities to strengthen workforce pathways and sustainability

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE YEAR



COMPASS CONFERENCE 2024
brought together 386 delegates to explore innovation in health, with 96% of participants valuing networking opportunities and professional development.

GP LIAISON PROGRAM
expanded across regions, improving communication between hospitals and primary healthcare.



NEW PILOT PROGRAM LAUNCHED
to support healing and recovery from family, domestic and sexual violence – we commissioned Katherine West Health Board and NT Health, Wurli-Wurlinjang Health Service and Sunrise Health Service deliver the Big Rivers Healing for Our Mob program, a new pilot supporting recovery from family, domestic and sexual violence through culturally grounded, trauma-informed care with a no-wrong-door approach and accessible referral pathways.



OUR BOARD

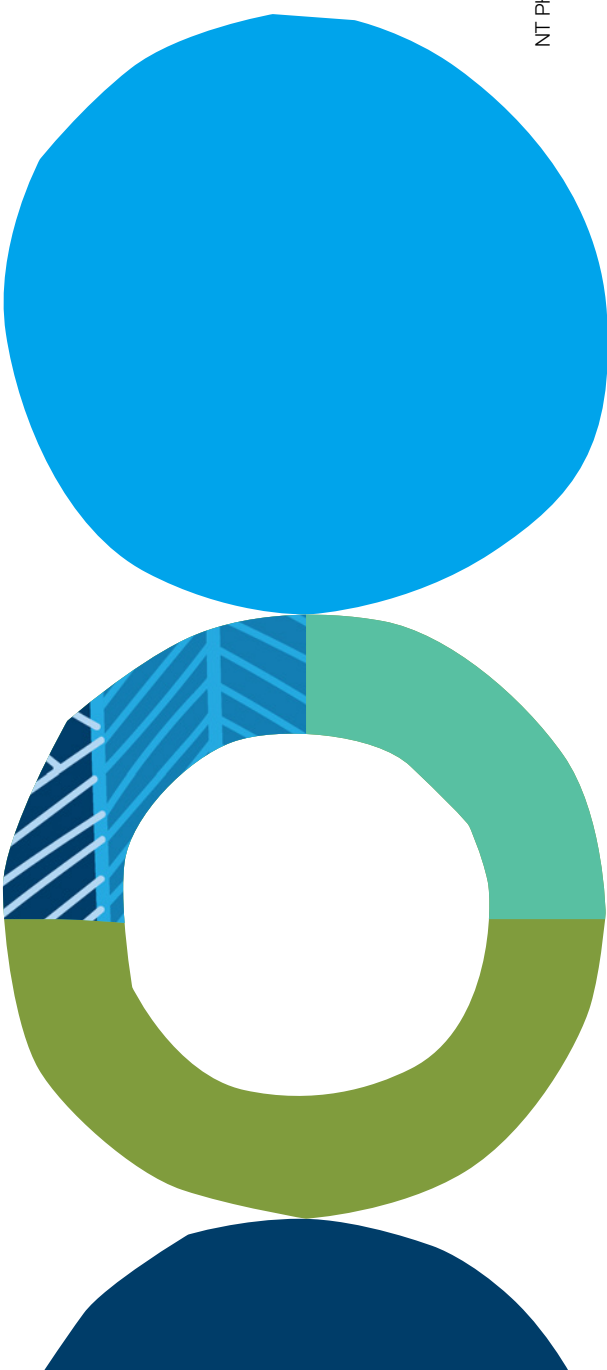
The NT PHN Board provides strategic leadership, strong governance, and oversight of organisational performance to ensure our activities improve the health and wellbeing of all Territorians. The Board sets the strategic direction, monitors performance and risk, and upholds compliance and accountability in line with our constitution and funding agreements.

Our independent, skills-based Board brings together Directors from across the Northern Territory who contribute diverse expertise, experience, and local insight. At least three Director positions are reserved for people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent, ensuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership and perspectives are central to our governance.

To support effective decision-making, the Board is advised by the Clinical Advisory Council and the Community Advisory Council. These councils ensure decisions are person-centred, locally relevant, and responsive to community needs and expectations.

During the financial year ending 30 June 2025, the following Directors served on the Board:

- Mr John Rawnsley – Board Chair (retired 25 November 2024)
- Mr David Blair – Board Chair (from 25 November 2024; previously Deputy Chair)
- Ms Susan Korner – Deputy Chair (from 25 November 2024)
- Ms Heather D'Antoine
- Dr Samuel Goodwin (retired 25 November 2024)
- Ms Liza Houghton (term ended 25 November 2024)
- Ms Helen Bowden
- Ms Kylie Stothers (appointed 25 November 2024)
- Ms Leeanne Caton (appointed 25 November 2024)
- Prof Sean Taylor (appointed 25 November 2024)
- Dr Simone Raye (appointed 25 November 2024)



OUR VISION

Our vision is for a culturally safe, inclusive, person-centred and integrated health care system that helps Territorians thrive.

OUR PURPOSE

At Northern Territory PHN, we seek to improve the health and wellbeing outcomes of communities across the Territory.

As an independent not-for-profit organisation funded by the Australian Government, we have a dual role. We are responsible for commissioning contemporary primary and mental health care services to the community. This means we oversee the delivery of vital health care initiatives to meet the needs of Territorians. We are also a Rural Health Workforce Agency (RWA), deploying skilled health care professionals to areas where they are needed most.

Our goal is clear—to support a primary and mental health care system that is responsive, coordinated and tailored to the diverse needs of our communities.

Our overarching commitment is to drive health system reform, ensuring equitable access to care closer to home and fostering a culturally safe and inclusive environment for health and wellbeing.

This includes delivering on the Australian Government's Health Reform Agenda for the Department of Health Disability and Ageing.

Our purpose is underpinned by:



Centering on cultural safety and inclusiveness



Actively listening and amplifying perspectives



Collaborating with our community



Focusing on solutions for the future

OUR OBJECTIVES

As a Primary Health Network, our core objectives are to:

Build capacity in primary and mental health service provision

We provide resources, training and support to enable primary care and mental health service providers to plan, support and deliver high-quality care.

Commission health services

We commission culturally appropriate and safe services that meet our community's unique health needs through various activities, such as health promotion, prevention, early intervention, treatment and management of chronic conditions.

Coordinate health system integration

We partner with collaborators and the community to shape an integrated and coordinated approach to primary and mental health care delivery, promoting better health and wellbeing outcomes for Territorians.

Champion health workforce reform

We address health workforce shortages in the Northern Territory, listening to the needs of the health sector, responding through initiatives that support recruitment and retention, workforce access and advocacy for future needs. We support growing our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.



OUR VALUES

Trusted partner

Working with others to promote unity and collective responsibility. We support each other to achieve better health and wellbeing outcomes for our communities.

Authentic

Acting with integrity, we are open, ethical and accountable in our actions and decisions. We are transparent and consistently do what is right in challenging situations.

Culturally safe

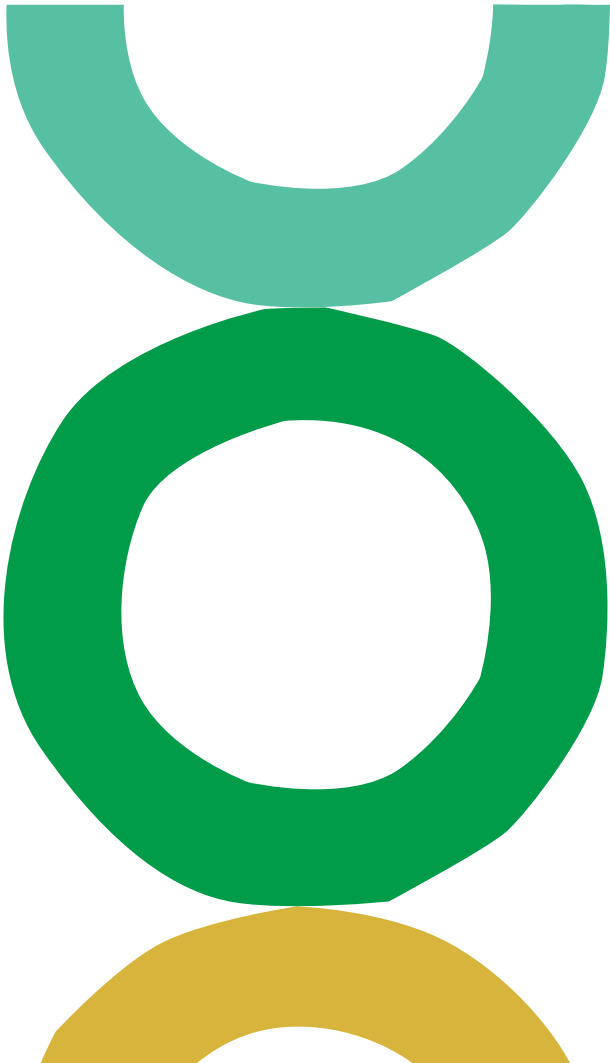
Committed to continuous learning and improved practices that deepen our understanding of how to best support culturally safe and responsive health care across the lifespan, especially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Courageous

Leading the way, speaking up, challenging inequity, embracing change, taking responsibility, advocating for the most disadvantaged communities, empowering others to embrace curiosity, and making meaningful changes in the health care system.

Inclusive

Valuing cultural responsiveness, inclusion and diversity, and fostering an atmosphere that celebrates diversity and promotes equality.



OUR STRUCTURE

NT PHN's organisational structure is designed to ensure strong governance, effective commissioning, and integrated delivery of primary health care services across the Northern Territory.

Paul Connolly
Chief Executive Officer

Paul Connolly provides overall leadership and strategic direction for NT PHN, ensuring the organisation delivers on its vision. As CEO, he is responsible for implementing the Board's strategic priorities, overseeing organisational performance, and maintaining strong relationships with government, partners, and communities.

Supporting the CEO is an experienced Executive Team, each leading key portfolios that together ensure NT PHN operates efficiently, remains financially sustainable, and continues to deliver high-impact outcomes across the Territory.

Jessica Dooley
Chief Financial Officer

Responsible for NT PHN's financial management, reporting and compliance, risk management and controls, strategic financial advice, and financial sustainability.

Executive Manager Corporate Services

Oversees information and communication technology, procurement, governance and risk, data and business performance, marketing and communications, operations, and people and culture.

Ebony Abbott-McCormack
Executive Manager Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health

Leads NT PHN's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health strategy, regional community engagement, and advocacy to strengthen culturally responsive primary health care.

Ali Lloyd
Executive Manager Strategy, Commissioning and Integration

Drives strategic planning, commissioning, regional partnerships, and reform across mental health, suicide prevention, alcohol and other drugs, and outreach services.

Clare Boardman PSM
Executive Manager Workforce and Primary Care Support

Responsible for the Rural Workforce Agency NT, workforce policy and strategy, clinical education, practice support, HealthPathways, digital health and primary care strategy.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

In 2024–25, NT PHN invested $82.4 million across key priority areas to improve the health of Territorians. We would like to thank the incredible services and health workers using these funds to deliver tailored and responsive care across the NT.

$5.1M CORE FUNDING

- Core flexible funding
- Covid-19

$53.1M MENTAL HEALTH / AOD

- Primary mental health care
- Drug and alcohol treatment activities
- Psychosocial
- Family, domestic and sexual violence
- Medicare Mental Health Centres
- Universal Aftercare Services
- Headspace program

$2.5M POPULATION HEALTH

- Aged Care
- Information Linkages and Capacity Building

You can find our full Annual Financial Report at **ntphn.org.au/about/publications/annual report**

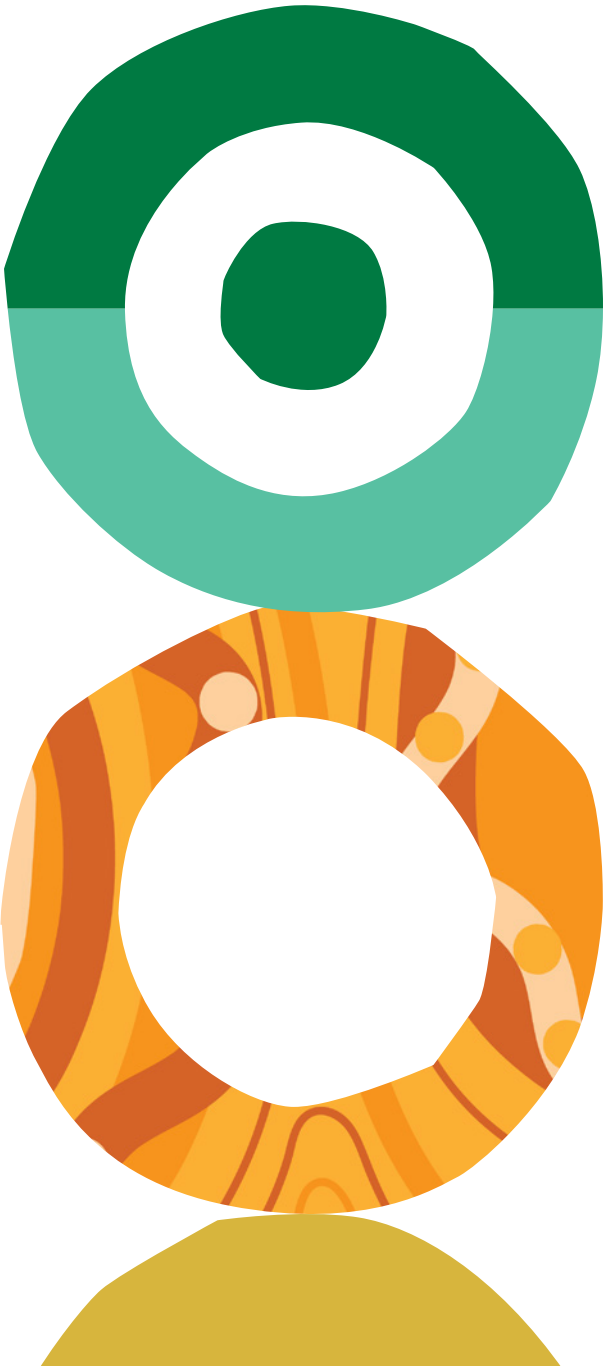
$18.8M PRIMARY CARE

- Clinical Referral Pathways
- MyMedicare
- General Practice in Aged Care – GP Matching and Thin Markets
- Workforce Incentive Program – Practice Stream
- Commissioning Multidisciplinary Teams
- GP Incentive Funding
- Integrated Team Care
- After Hours
- Digital health
- Palliative care
- Endometriosis
- Medical Outreach Indigenous Chronic Diseases Program

$2.9M WORKFORCE

- Rural Workforce Agency
- GP Pre-Fellowship Program
- Health Workforce Scholarship Program
- GP Workforce Planning and Prioritisation

TOTAL $82.4M





OUR PRIORITIES

FOCUS AREA 1:

FOSTERING CULTURAL RESPECT, SAFETY AND RESPONSIVENESS

NT PHN is dedicated to nurturing and advancing cultural practices that positively impact the health and wellbeing of our communities.

OUR HIGHLIGHTS

Reconciliation Action Plan

Our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan was launched in July for 2025 to 2027, building on our earlier RAPs and reaffirming NT PHN's commitment to reconciliation and cultural safety across the Territory. It is grounded in 4 pillars: relationships, respect, opportunities and governance. The plan sets clear actions to strengthen partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, embed cultural learning across our workforce, and create meaningful employment and business opportunities. It introduces stronger accountability through regular reporting and monitoring, with tangible deliverables such as celebrating key cultural events, increasing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation in leadership and governance, and embedding supplier diversity strategies. By aligning with our Strategic Plan and Cultural Respect Framework, the RAP ensures that reconciliation remains central to our work with communities and providers, driving better health outcomes for all Territorians.



Cultural and Community Events

Throughout 2024–25, our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander branch led and participated in cultural and community events across the Northern Territory, strengthening relationships, visibility and trust while demonstrating our ongoing commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health priorities.

- Barunga Festival 2025: NT PHN sponsored and attended this major cultural festival, engaging thousands of community members and service providers through a health promotion stall and on-ground activities focused on workforce pathways, cultural commissioning and networking.
- Deadly Cup Carnival: We promoted community health initiatives through sport, delivering messages on preventative health and workforce opportunities while celebrating culture and community pride.
- NAIDOC Week & Reconciliation Week: The branch coordinated activities across NT PHN offices, including storytelling sessions with Elders, performances by local artists, cultural workshops and morning teas that fostered staff reflection and strengthened internal cultural capability.
- Wadeye Futures Day: Our team engaged stakeholders and carried out targeted recruitment activities in the Wadeye community.



Leading Our Ways – Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Program

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership is critical to culturally safe, inclusive and effective health care across the NT. To support this, NT PHN funded Indigenous Allied Health Australia NT Workforce Development to run the eight-month ‘Leading Our Ways’ program, a culturally centred leadership course tailored to the Territory. The program combines intensive regional workshops, cultural mentoring, On-Country learning, peer networking, leadership projects (aligned to community priorities) and IAHA’s Cultural Responsiveness in Action modules.

Since its launch, 25 participants from 4 NT regions have joined, including staff from Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations and mainstream services. The program is strengthening leadership capacity in the Aboriginal health sector, increasing representation in management roles and empowering participants to lead change, build networks and challenge systemic racism.







Social and Emotional Wellbeing Program – Culturally Appropriate Mental Health Support

NT PHN works to ensure Territorians have access to culturally informed mental health and wellbeing services, recognising that western clinical models often don't fit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. In the Barkly region we funded Anyinginyi Health Aboriginal Corporation to run the 'Social and Emotional Wellbeing' program, which employs a male worker to engage men with culturally relevant support, offering workforce development and regular guidance. Since its introduction, the program has improved access to holistic care, integrating mental health and social wellbeing. This has increased engagement with services, promoted healthier lifestyle choices and empowered participants to live in accordance with their values and culture. It is now embedded in the region and continues to provide ongoing, culturally safe support.

Medical Dhäwu Dhäwu – Yolŋu-led Primary Care Innovation

It is well understood that many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people describe health clinics as culturally unsafe with consultations delivered in English, which is not their first language. To improve outcomes and help people understand their health stories, NT PHN funds the Shared Medical Appointments pilot program in 4 regions. This included funding Miwatj Health Service to trial Medical Dhäwu Dhäwu, a Yolŋu led program combining individual clinical care with group education and peer support in culturally safe spaces chosen by participants. Sessions led by local facilitators create trust, translate between Yolŋu Matha and English and empower participants to guide their own care. NT PHN also brought Aboriginal Medical Services Australia, Australian Society of Lifestyle Medicine, and other Aboriginal community controlled health organisations together to share learning and build a foundation for sustainable delivery. Early results are overwhelmingly positive: the model fosters trust, respect and "both ways learning," shifts power balances and makes care more meaningful and effective. All participants said they would attend again, facilitators want it to continue and nearly all clinicians plan to integrate it into their practice.

Healthy Ageing On Country at Central Australian Aboriginal Congress

NT PHN works to help older Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people stay strong, active and connected through a Healthy Ageing program delivered by Central Australian Aboriginal Congress. This culturally grounded program combines clinical care with group activities such as exercise, hydrotherapy and community events, and is supported by a First Nation's Allied Health Assistant who ensures care is culturally safe and relevant. Now reaching more than 100 Elders each month, it builds strong ties to community, culture and Country, and many participants describe the sessions as the highlight of their week, especially when held outdoors on Country.

FOCUS AREA 2:

SUPPORTING PRIMARY CARE AND MENTAL HEALTH SERVICE PROVIDERS

NT PHN is committed to developing the capacity and capability of primary care and mental health services to improve access to high-quality care for Territorians.

OUR HIGHLIGHTS

Building Capability Through Professional Development Sessions

NT PHN supports primary health care by providing continuous professional development (CPD) that helps health professionals expand their knowledge, skills and competence. Through formal courses, self directed learning and quality improvement initiatives, practitioners enhance their clinical and professional abilities, enabling them to respond better to complex needs, stay current with evolving practices and deliver safer, more effective care.

During the year, NT PHN delivered **73** clinical education and CPD sessions; more than half were hosted virtually to maximise access for professionals in rural and remote areas. A total of **1569** professionals participated, often with the support of CPD grants from NT PHN.



Supporting the Primary Healthcare Sector Through Chronic Conditions Management Medicare Benefits Schedule Changes

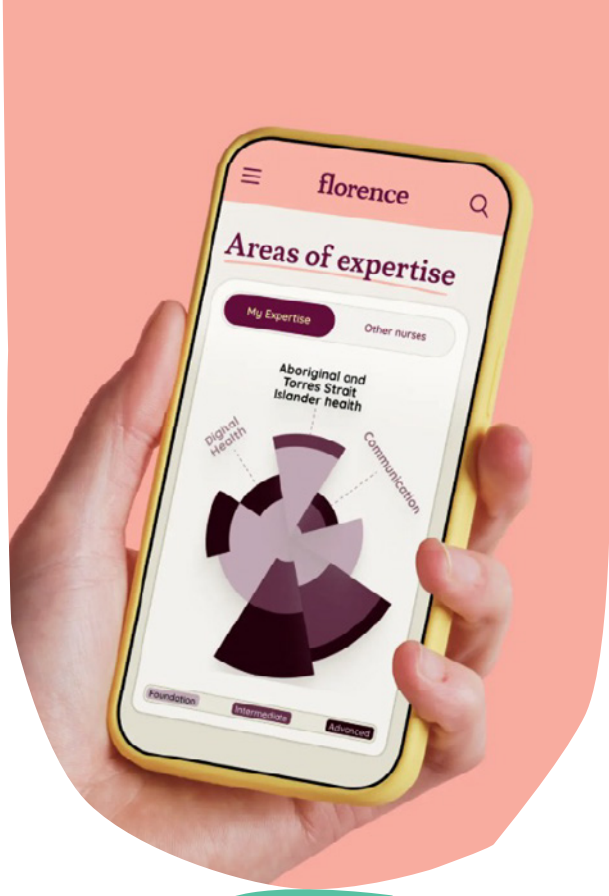
Chronic disease is a leading cause of illness and hospitalisation in the NT. In 2025, the Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) introduced its first major reform to chronic disease management in 20 years, creating the new GP Chronic Condition Management Plan (GPCCMP). While the changes aimed to simplify processes, reduce duplication and modernise care planning, they also required significant sector adjustment and support.

To enable a smooth transition, NT PHN worked closely with general practices, allied health providers and sector stakeholders. This included delivering webinars, information sessions, fact sheets, quick-reference guides and implementation tools. Practice Support Coordinators provided direct, on-the-ground assistance to clinics, answering questions and helping integrate the new model. NT PHN also facilitated collaboration between GPs and allied health providers to support timely referrals and multidisciplinary care planning.

Early data shows strong uptake of the GPCCMP across the NT. Practices report reduced administrative burden and improved efficiency, alongside easier referrals to allied health services and timely plan reviews. Engagement with NT PHN resources and education sessions has been high, strengthening confidence across the sector in implementing the reforms.

Connecting Nurses with Career Support Through Florence by APNA

Australian Primary Health Care Nurses Association (APNA)'s new Florence app supports the professional growth of nurses working across the Territory. As a launch partner, we gave NT nurses early access to the free app, which provides tools for professional development tracking, goal setting and career opportunities. Florence allows nurses in diverse and remote settings to overcome geographical barriers by connecting them to a broader professional community. By strengthening professional recognition and supporting workforce retention, the app helps nurses take charge of their careers, fostering a skilled and connected nursing workforce across the NT.



Practice Support: Strengthening Relationships and Sector Engagement

NT PHN's Practice Support team builds capability across primary care through regular, outcome-focused engagement. In 2024–25, the team conducted 180 practice engagements, an increase of 114 from the previous year. These connections enable data collection, the rollout of new initiatives, and tailored support to help practices adapt to sector changes.

Key areas of support included updates to Chronic Conditions Management, the Bulk Billing Practice Incentives Program, and the National Lung Cancer Screening Program.

Education and networking continued to be a focus, with highlights including:

- 25 participants completing CPR accreditation
- 12 participants in Medicare Benefits Schedule billing training
- 12 completions and 27 registrations in vaccine giving courses
- 3 drop-in sessions and 3 Health Hub networking events.

To assist practices, NT PHN developed practical tools and communication resources to help teams implement new sector requirements. These are now available on the NT PHN website.

GP Thin Markets Initiative

Through the Commonwealth's Thin Markets initiative, NT PHN identified and supported primary care services experiencing sustainability challenges in Berry Springs and Nhulunbuy. Working with an external consultant and local stakeholders, NT PHN developed sustainability plans and business cases that were subsequently approved and funded by the Commonwealth.

The Commonwealth has since used NT PHN's business case and reporting templates as best practice examples for other jurisdictions. Implementation of both projects continues through 2025–26, helping ensure long-term access to primary health care in vulnerable regions.

Whilst the Thin Markets Program had limited places available, NT PHN intends to use these pilot sites to support services more broadly in the future.

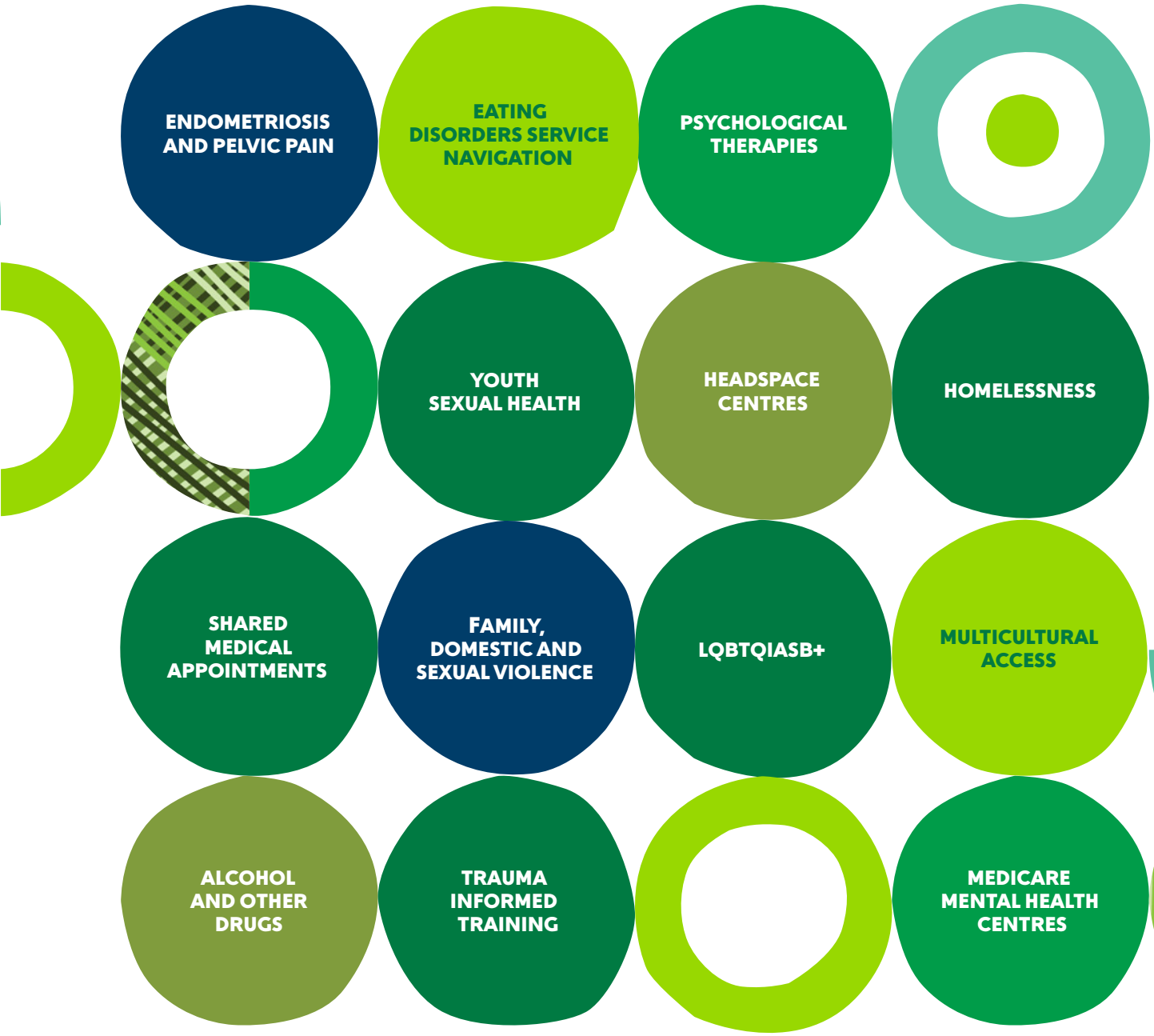
FOCUS AREA 3:

COMMISSIONING SERVICES TO MEET LOCAL HEALTH NEEDS

NT PHN is committed to improving how we commission programs and services to be culturally safe, transparent, meaningful, outcomes-focused and innovative.

Our achievements in 2024-25

Over 34 commissioned programs, delivering 222 services across the NT. Programs include:



OUR HIGHLIGHTS

Opening of Strongbala Minds Walk-in-Talk-in Space

Commissioned by NT PHN as part of the NT Bilateral Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Agreement between the Australian Government and the Northern Territory Government, the Jawoyn Association Aboriginal Corporation opened Australia's first Aboriginal led Medicare Mental Health Satellite in Katherine. The Strongbala Minds, Walk-in-Talk-in space is a warm, welcoming, inclusive and safe space for all people to access when experiencing mental illness. The service is an example of where traditional Aboriginal healing and therapies, and western practices can work together. The Jawoyn team are proudly delivering this much needed service to the Katherine community, ensuring to create pathways and connections with other services so all people are triaged and referred to the right levels of care. With strong Aboriginal Elder leadership, Jawoyns' vision for a culturally led service that meets community needs is now operating and open to all people.



New Pilot Program Launched to Support Healing and Recovery From Family, Domestic and Sexual Violence

NT PHN has commissioned Katherine West Health Board to work in partnership with Wurli-Wurlinjang Health Service, Sunrise Health Service and NT Health, to deliver the Big Rivers Healing for our Mob program that aims to support the healing and recovery of victim survivors who have experienced family, domestic and sexual violence. The program has a 'no wrong door' approach and has been designed with safety, therapeutic practice, cultural connection and healing in mind. The service welcomes referrals from all services including self-referrals so that there are no barriers to access. This program is one of many that NT PHN has commissioned to support our workforce in building their capacity to provide services in this space, and support the recovery and healing for those who need it.

Rapid Support for Displaced Hostel Residents

In April 2025, a hostel closure in Darwin required residents to find alternative accommodation within 3 weeks. NT PHN partnered with Anglicare NT's Care Finder team to ensure continuity of care and support. Through targeted funding and collaboration, the team provided immediate assistance, registering older residents for aged care packages and connecting them to housing and support services. This rapid response reduced the risk of homelessness and maintained access to essential services. The initiative strengthened partnerships between service providers and community groups, enhancing capability for coordinated responses to future housing challenges and ensuring displaced residents had clear pathways to safe accommodation and continued care.

Building Capacity in Mental Health Services

NT PHN commissions TeamHEALTH to deliver culturally informed programs that build the capability of the Territory's mental health sector. TeamTALK, a free phone-based service, provides early intervention, emotional support, and referral pathways for people seeking help. By offering accessible, low-intensity support, TeamTALK reduces pressure on clinical services and allows health professionals to focus on people with more complex needs. Through the Psychosocial Program, TeamHEALTH also delivers trauma-informed, culturally safe support that connects clients to housing, health services, and personalised care plans. Together, these initiatives strengthen the mental health system by improving service coordination, building workforce capacity, and supporting Territorians to achieve stability and recovery.

Building Capability Through Psychosocial Support

Funded by NT PHN and delivered by Mission Australia, the Psychosocial Support Program provides trauma-informed, flexible support for people with complex needs. The program focuses on trust, consistency, and individualised care, enabling participants to engage effectively with services and access the right mix of psychological, social, and practical supports.

By coordinating care and linking clients with broader programs such as the NDIS and Territory Families, the program enhances service integration and workforce collaboration across the sector. Participants consistently report improved wellbeing, greater stability, and stronger community connections.

FOCUS AREA 4:

INTEGRATING LOCALLY RESPONSIVE HEALTH SYSTEMS

NT PHN is dedicated to aligning and collaborating on shared priorities and strengthening culturally safe, integrated, coordinated and locally responsive healthcare.

OUR HIGHLIGHTS

GP Liaison Program: Improving Referral Success Through Collaboration

Transitions of care between hospitals and primary healthcare can be complex in the NT due to workforce mobility and ageing digital systems. To improve communication and patient outcomes, NT PHN launched the GP Liaison Program in 2023, in partnership with NT Health, expanding to Central Australia in 2024.

GP Liaison Officers based in public hospitals work with NT PHN, hospital teams and primary health care providers to strengthen referral processes and build stronger clinical partnerships. The program has reduced rejected referrals, improved communication between GPs and hospitals, and enhanced access to specialist advice through better contact pathways.

The program has introduced shared care initiatives, localised education, and specialist in-reach services. Feedback from GPs and hospital staff indicates improved continuity of care and greater confidence navigating referral systems.



Greater Choice for At Home Palliative Care Program

Access to culturally safe, locally delivered palliative care remains a challenge across the NT. In partnership with NT Health, NT PHN delivers the Greater Choice for At Home Palliative Care Program to support Territorians to plan and receive care aligned with their values and preferences.

A senior Palliative Care Registered Nurse and Advance Care Planning (ACP) Facilitator support the Top End, East Arnhem and Big Rivers regions. In 2024–25, 66 education workshops were delivered to 366 health professionals to empower them with the skills to have clear and open discussions about end-of-life care. The program strengthened local capability, increased the accessibility of ACPs, and built clinician confidence to engage in end-of-life discussions.

Collaborations with Miwatj Health, NT Health and the Royal Flying Doctor Service have enhanced regional coordination. Feedback shows the program is fostering more open, informed conversations about end-of-life care and empowering people to make proactive choices.

HealthPathways: Supporting Clinicians at the Point of Care

HealthPathways, delivered in partnership with NT Health, is a locally developed website to help clinical teams, particularly GPs, navigate complex variations in local referral pathways and manage their patients' health conditions. In 2024–25, NT PHN expanded the editorial team to 4 GP clinical editors, creating 21 new pathways and updating 135 existing ones with input from more than 20 NT Health experts.

The platform now offers 577 pathways and recorded more than 100,000 page views over the year. Clinicians particularly value the recent integration with electronic Therapeutic Guidelines (eTG), which are digital, evidence-based resources that provide practical treatment advice for healthcare professionals. Ongoing collaboration ensures the platform remains accurate, user-friendly and reflective of Territory healthcare needs.

Integrated Care for Chronic Disease Management

Pulmonary, cardiac and diabetic conditions remain among the leading causes of preventable hospitalisations in Darwin and Alice Springs. Many people living with these chronic diseases find it challenging to access coordinated care due to cost, transport and the complexity of navigating health systems. To address this, we launched the 4 year Multidisciplinary Team (MDT) Program in June 2025 to improve access to affordable, integrated care. The program funds allied health gap fees, supports flexible care options and introduces System Navigators to coordinate services. Co-designed with local providers, the MDT Program partners with 11 allied health organisations to bring GPs and support services together to deliver holistic, team based care.

Since its launch, the program has been well received by health professionals in Darwin and Alice Springs, with a steady flow of referrals indicating strong community engagement. The initiative is reducing cost barriers for people with chronic conditions, strengthening collaboration between allied health, general practice and support services, and ensuring System Navigators help clients connect with the care they need. Health professionals involved in the program report that supporting people to improve their quality of life and prevent hospitalisations is rewarding, and they look forward to seeing the program continue to grow and evolve.

Building Cross-Sector Partnerships Between the Health and Community Sectors

Domestic, Family and Sexual Violence (DFSV) needs a multi-sector approach that builds on local systems and strengths. In Central Australia, NT PHN has funded the Central Australian Women's Legal Service (CAWLS) to work with primary care services in the region to strengthen their capacity to recognise and respond to respond to DFSV.

Since February 2024, CAWLS has been working with local health services to build staff skills, confidence and clear referral pathways. This work is tailored to the needs of Central Australia and the Barkly, and has supported stronger partnerships across the region.

So far, 162 staff across 9 health partners have taken part in DFSV training, with 51 completing further practical modules on screening, risk assessment and safety planning. With support from NT PHN, CAWLS has also delivered DFSV Fundamentals training to 220 frontline workers in Alice Springs and Tennant Creek.

This work is helping to connect the health and community sectors, so services can better respond to DFSV and support people in their communities.

Digital Health

NT PHN strengthened its digital health capability through the establishment of a dedicated Digital Health Lead and the commencement of work to scope a Digital Health Strategy for primary care in the Northern Territory.

This strategic focus aims to improve data connectivity, clinical decision-making, and system integration across the health sector. During the year, NT PHN supported the rollout and optimisation of key digital systems, including Primary Sense and Primary Health Insights, enhancing the use of data to inform service planning and quality improvement.

NT PHN also continued collaboration with the Australian Digital Health Agency and other partners to progress Territory-wide digital health priorities, supporting a more connected and effective primary health care system.



FOCUS AREA 5:

EVOLVING OUR ORGANISATIONAL CAPABILITY AND GROWING OUR WORKPLACE CULTURE

NT PHN is committed to enhancing our organisational capability and transforming our workplace environment to empower our people to contribute to health equity.

OUR HIGHLIGHTS

Key People Systems

NT PHN's investment in key people systems has strengthened organisational capability by improving efficiency, accessibility and staff experience. The Human Resource Information Management System (HRIS) streamlines recruitment through integration with SEEK and NT PHN's website, while the onboarding module enhances the experience for new starters and will soon support a more structured performance management approach.

The introduction of the Employee Assistance Program, Sonder, reinforces NT PHN's commitment to a safe and supportive workplace. Alongside other wellbeing initiatives, these systems empower staff to perform effectively, grow in their roles and contribute to NT PHN's capacity to better support partners and communities across the Territory.



Building Capability Through Learning

NT PHN invests in professional development to build staff capability and ensure our people have the skills and confidence to deliver high-quality outcomes for partners and communities. Training focused on cultural safety, leadership and workplace health and safety, including programs such as Mental Health First Aid, cultural awareness and trauma-informed care.

The introduction of a new Learning Management System (LMS) will further strengthen NT PHN's learning culture by providing accessible, flexible and continuous learning opportunities. By equipping staff with the tools to grow professionally, NT PHN continues to build an agile, capable workforce ready to respond to the evolving needs of the Northern Territory health sector.

Equipping Our People to Partner Effectively

In 2025, NT PHN introduced a new Stakeholder Engagement Framework to strengthen how we listen, collaborate and co-design with communities, service providers and government partners. The framework builds the capability of our staff to engage meaningfully, embedding cultural safety, transparency and lived experience into all areas of our work.

By equipping staff with the tools and confidence to engage effectively, NT PHN enhances its ability to form genuine partnerships and deliver health solutions shaped by those who use and deliver them. Engagement is embedded across our daily operations through collaboration with service providers, participation in conferences and co-design workshops, and maintaining open communication with stakeholders.

This consistent, organisation-wide approach ensures NT PHN remains a trusted partner, responsive to community priorities and committed to improving health outcomes across the Territory.



ISO 9001:2015 Certification

In 2024, NT PHN achieved ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management System certification, reflecting our commitment to quality, accountability and continuous improvement. This milestone strengthens confidence in our organisation's governance and ensures we deliver consistent, high-quality services. We streamlined workflows, enhanced compliance systems and engaged staff across all branches to embed a culture of quality. Certification is part of our ongoing journey to improve how we work with communities, providers and stakeholders.

In addition to maintaining ISO 9001:2015 Certification, we continued to enhance our governance and risk management practices to ensure accountability, cultural safety and stakeholder confidence. Key initiatives included:

- Refreshing our Enterprise Risk Management Framework, including updates to the Strategic Risk Register and Risk Appetite Statement, to better reflect organisational priorities and community expectations
- Redeveloping Operational Risk Registers to align with our updated risk appetite and support consistent, informed decision-making across all levels
- Enhancing cyber security and data protection controls to safeguard sensitive information and uphold trust with stakeholders
- Improving commissioning oversight, with strengthened monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure quality and culturally safe service delivery
- Delivering targeted staff training to build risk awareness, foster a culture of shared responsibility and embed risk-informed thinking into everyday decision-making.

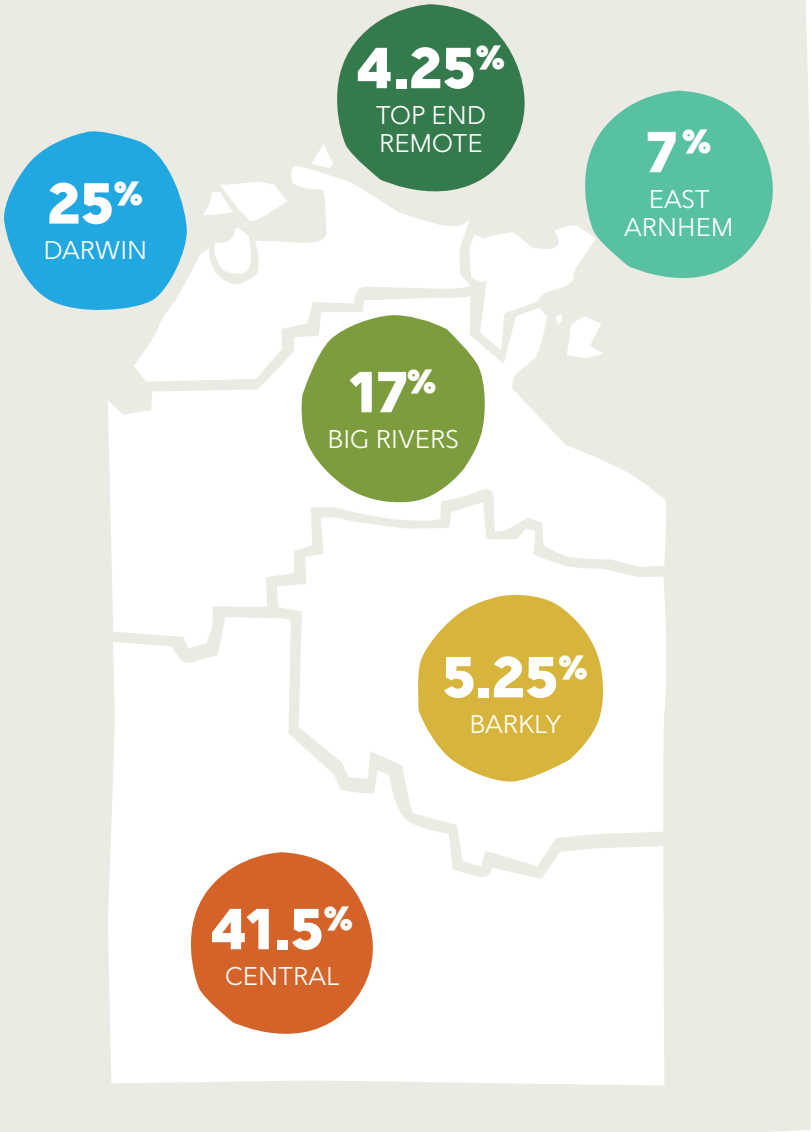
FOCUS AREA 6:

SUPPORTING THE RURAL HEALTH WORKFORCE

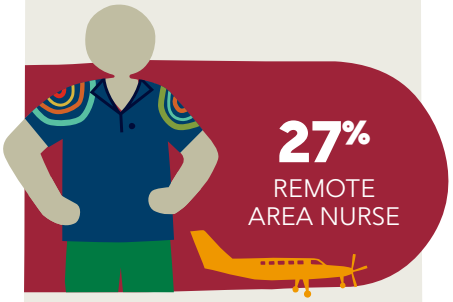
NT PHN is committed to achieving sustainable workforce solutions to improve primary and mental health care access in the Northern Territory.

OUR HIGHLIGHTS

Percentage of recruits by region:



Top three positions recruited to:







Graduate Nurse Program

In partnership with Charles Darwin University (CDU), NT PHN commenced development of a Graduate Nurse Program for remote primary health care. Building on the work pioneered by Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, the program seeks to create a structured and supportive pathway for graduate nurses to transition into remote practice. The initiative will pilot in the Big Rivers region in collaboration with the three local Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHSs), with the aim of strengthening the remote nursing workforce, improving retention, and supporting culturally safe, community-based care. This work represents a key step towards building a sustainable and locally skilled primary health care workforce across the Northern Territory.

GP Locum Program

NT PHN continued to expand and strengthen its GP Locum Program, providing vital workforce support to maintain consistent access to primary health care in remote and regional communities. During the year, the program delivered 1,919 days of GP locum cover and welcomed 19 new locum doctors to the Territory. There has been a notable increase in ongoing locum arrangements, including rotational coverage arrangements, improving continuity of care for communities. The program also plays a key role in GP attraction and recruitment, with NT PHN actively promoting locum placements as pathways to permanent roles, contributing to a more stable and sustainable primary care workforce across the Northern Territory.

2025 Health Workforce Needs Assessment

The 2025 Health Workforce Needs Assessment (HWNA) provided a Territory-wide view of workforce strengths and challenges, with a particular focus on general practice. It identified four interconnected priorities essential to sustaining a skilled, supported and community-reflective primary healthcare workforce:

- developing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander GP workforce
- enhancing pathways into and through primary healthcare careers
- building capacity to attract, retain and support the existing workforce
- developing locally responsive, sustainable models of care

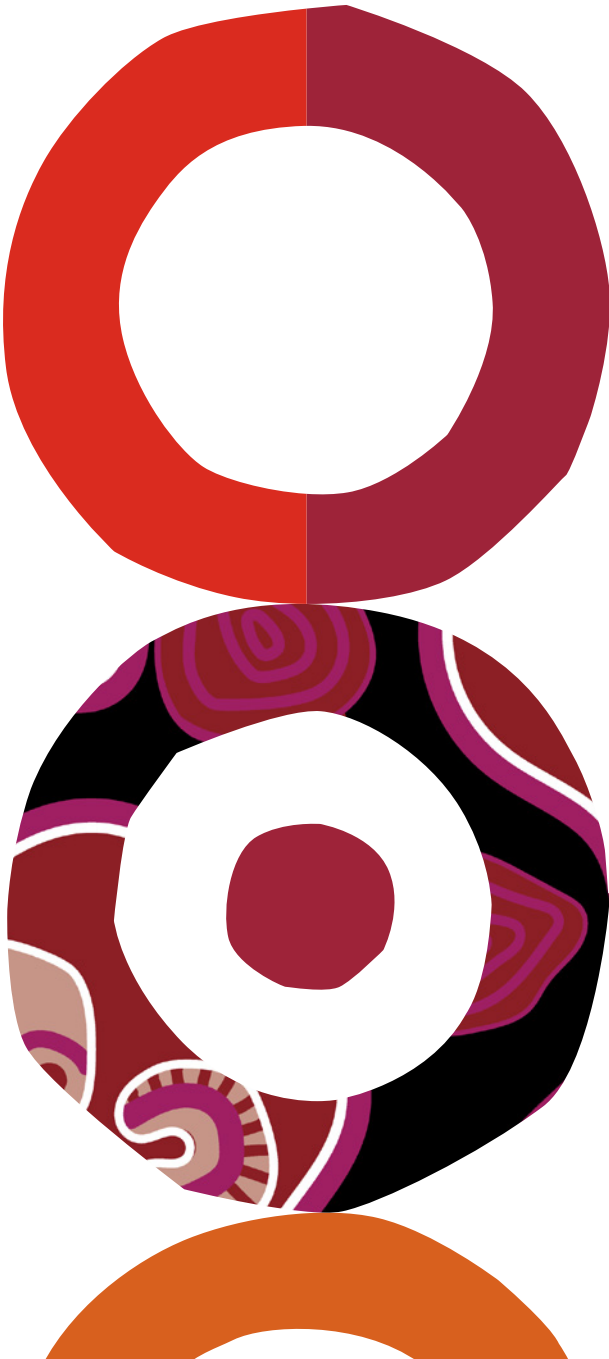
These priorities guide NT PHN's ongoing collaboration with health services, education and training providers, communities and governments to ensure the NT's primary healthcare workforce remains resilient and responsive.

On Country Training – Wadeye

Wadeye, one of the NT's largest remote Aboriginal communities, continues to demonstrate leadership in culturally grounded workforce development. NT PHN supports On Country Training programs that embed learning in culture, language and community context to strengthen Aboriginal health workforce participation.

In 2024–25, NT PHN established the On Country Training Network Group and Advisory Committee to guide culturally responsive training models. In Wadeye, partnerships with Thamarrurr Rangers, Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Thamarrurr Catholic College and Da Ngimalmin have supported community-led learning and mentorship.

A key outcome has been the growth of the Certificate III in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care through Kardu Diminin Corporation, enabling local residents to gain formal qualifications while contributing directly to community health. This has led to improved chronic disease management, higher clinic attendance and increased immunisation rates.



Compass 2024

The Compass Conference is NT PHN's flagship professional development event, designed to strengthen the capability and connection of the Northern Territory's primary healthcare workforce. Held on 16–17 August 2024 at the Darwin Convention Centre, the conference brought together 386 delegates from across the NT under the theme Rethink, Reimagine, Revisit: Innovation in Health.

With more than 75 speakers, 3 keynote addresses, 10 workshops and 10 themed sessions, the program focused on culturally safe care, chronic disease, mental health and workforce development. Enhancements such as wellness zones, a prayer space, an expanded exhibitor hall and remote travel grants increased accessibility and inclusivity for attendees from diverse regions and backgrounds.

Evaluation results reflected strong outcomes, with 96% of participants valuing networking opportunities and 82% reporting that their professional development needs were met. Through events like Compass, NT PHN continues to build a skilled, connected and supported rural and remote workforce equipped to deliver high-quality care across the Territory.





Health Professional of the Year Awards 2024

The Health Professional of the Year Awards recognise and celebrate excellence across the Northern Territory's primary healthcare sector. By acknowledging the achievements of individuals and teams, the awards help strengthen professional pride, promote knowledge sharing and inspire continued commitment to rural and remote health.

In 2024, NT PHN received 38 nominations across 7 categories, showcasing the depth of skill, innovation and compassion within the Territory's health workforce. The Administrator's Medal for Health Professional of the Year was awarded to Bruce Reid from Red Lily Health Service for his outstanding leadership and contribution to Aboriginal community health.

Through these awards, NT PHN continues to support, retain and motivate the rural and remote workforce, fostering a culture that values excellence and recognises the vital role health professionals play in improving health outcomes for all Territorians.



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