

Innovative Models of Care (IMOC) Program – Indigenous Wellness Connect

Darling Downs and West Moreton Primary Health Network will deliver the Indigenous Wellness Connect: an Allied Health-led Digital Health and First Nations complex condition management model.

Round 5: Darling Downs and West Moreton PHN Indigenous Wellness Connect

Location: Toomelah and Boggabilla NSW and Goondiwindi QLD (MM4)

Funding: \$1.6 million over 4 years from 2024

The activity will trial a Primary Care-led Digital Health and First Nations complex condition management model. Indigenous Wellness Connect is designed to provide culturally safe, patient centred, digitally connected primary care that improves equity of access for Indigenous people based in rural and remote Australia. The model will test new ways of delivering primary healthcare services across connected rural and remote communities, improve continuing of care and access to primary health practitioners, not currently available. It uses the range of skills offered by multidisciplinary Allied Health and nursing professionals within the Indigenous communities. Medical clinicians partner via digital connectivity, to deliver primary care services to communities where there are workforce and service shortages.

This project creates a digitally enabled, culturally safe, connected network of primary care services between underserved rural communities with Indigenous populations, to the closest primary care hub and beyond. It uses a telehealth cart system with diagnostic peripheral tools supported by enhanced digital satellite connectivity, remote support from multidisciplinary team of General Practitioners, Allied Health and Specialists. The project can also support the non-Indigenous population for management of their complex health conditions.

The IMOC grant will enable the organisation to engage a Project Coordinator, Indigenous Health Coordinator and Telehealth Care Coordinator. They will manage and provide strategic oversight of the Project and actively participate in the various Governance and Working committees. The grant will also enable the purchase of key IT resources such as the Vision Flex telehealth cart (one per site with peripherals), the associated subscriptions, satellite access and training.

Overseen by the governance structure of Macintyre Health Alliance, the project will benefit from the expertise of the members of the Alliance representing the local community, health providers and government at all three levels. In addition, cultural training will be provided to the telehealth General Practice hub, to increase their level of awareness in supporting Indigenous patients and how to best incorporate culturally safe practices into their clinical care.