



Australian Government



Queensland
Government

Norfolk Island State-Level Service Delivery

2023-2024 Overview

October 2024

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Acknowledgement

The Queensland Government would like to recognise the rich culture and history of Norfolk Island, and the role of local stakeholders to help inform place-based service design and delivery of Queensland services.

The local knowledge and lived experience of Norfolk Islanders is critical to shaping the delivery of culturally and contextually appropriate services for the island.

Executive Summary

In October 2021, the Queensland and Commonwealth governments entered an enduring partnership to support the delivery of state-level services to the Norfolk Island community.

Queensland commenced service delivery on 1 January 2022, providing education services at the Norfolk Island Central School (NICS) and providing operational support and advice to the Norfolk Island Health and Residential Aged Care Service (NIHRACS) and coordinating clinical pathways to Queensland-based healthcare. Queensland subsequently expanded its services to the Norfolk Island community by supporting full-time, part-time, and school-based apprenticeships and traineeships beginning on or after 1 January 2022.

This report outlines key achievements for 2023-24. Highlights include:

- Finalised the Custodial Services Schedule in June 2024 to complete the transition of custodial services from New South Wales (NSW) to Queensland from 1 July 2024.
- Completed baseline requirements to align Norfolk Island criminal history records management with other jurisdictions in Australia.
- Completed the Queensland delivery of the Higher School Certificate at NICS and commenced the full transition to the Queensland delivery of the Australian Curriculum from Prep to Year 10 and the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority senior curriculum for NICS students.
- Delivered 1,646 outpatient appointments through Metro North Hospital and Health Services (MNHHS) to Norfolk Islanders, with more than half accessed through virtual care modalities, enabling access to person-centred care close to home.
- Supported 21 apprenticeships and traineeships for Norfolk Island through Queensland, including TAFE Queensland delivering both in-campus and online training to 8 apprentices and trainees.

Queensland expertise in supporting and delivering high quality services in remote and island settings continues to facilitate successful delivery of services tailored to meet the unique needs of the Norfolk Island community.

In 2024-25 the focus on enhancing services to Norfolk Island will continue. Key priorities include reviewing the current Queensland service delivery schedules to ensure these continue to meet the needs of the Norfolk Island community and exploring the feasibility of providing potential additional services. Additional services being considered include community corrective services and worker screening checks.

Queensland engages with communities to ensure service design is fit-for-purpose and reflects the uniqueness of each context. Community consultation, including through the Norfolk Island Governance Committee, is a fundamental step in Queensland's partnership approach to delivering services for Norfolk Island.

Service Delivery Arrangements

Services

In October 2021, the Queensland and Commonwealth governments signed the *Intergovernmental Partnership Agreement on State Service Delivery to Norfolk Island (IGA)*, which included a commitment for Queensland to commence delivery of initial health and education services from 1 January 2022.

To enable service delivery, the relevant Queensland departments negotiated and executed service schedules with the Commonwealth Government. Each Schedule outlines detailed operational arrangements to support the delivery of services under the IGA, including roles and responsibilities, funding arrangements and legislation to be applied to Norfolk Island to enable the lawful delivery of services by Queensland.

In addition to initial agreed services, the IGA commits Queensland to work with the Commonwealth to consider potential provision of additional services over time, subject to negotiation and approval by the Queensland Government.

Further information

Further information on state service delivery arrangements can be found on the Commonwealth Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development, Communications and the Arts website at:

https://www.infrastructure.gov.au/territories-regions-cities/territories/norfolk_island/norfolk-island-state-services-partnership.

Department of the Premier and Cabinet

Services

The Department of the Premier and Cabinet (DPC) provides whole-of-government leadership and oversight of the delivery of state-level services to Norfolk Island under the Central Policy and Coordination Schedule.

DPC works across Queensland Government service delivery agencies to:

- Undertake strategic management and oversight of the IGA.
- Support negotiation of additional service delivery requirements.
- Ensure an appropriate legislative framework to support the delivery of services according to the IGA.
- Support consultation and engagement with the Norfolk Island community.

Statement of Intent – DPC is committed to working with the Norfolk Island community, including through collaborative forums such as the Norfolk Island Governance Committee, to ensure Norfolk Island history, culture, and local knowledge are reflected in decision-making, with priority emphasis on locally-based service solutions where possible.

Achievements

- Worked with Queensland Corrective Services to progress amendments to the *Corrective Services Act 2006* in the Queensland Parliament to provide the lawful authority for Norfolk Island prisoners to be detained in Queensland correctional facilities.
- Worked with Queensland Corrective Services to finalise the Custodial Services Schedule in June 2024 to complete the transition of custodial services from NSW to Queensland from 1 July 2024.
- Represented Queensland on the Norfolk Island Governance Committee (NIGC), providing policy and service delivery expertise to support decision making.
- Established the Norfolk Island Criminal Record Working Group as a partnership forum for shared consultation, issues resolution and decision making across specific government agencies to align Norfolk Island criminal history records management processes with other jurisdictions in Australia. Key outcomes include the digitisation of all relevant police and court historical records and effective digital interface between the Norfolk Island police operational systems and centralised policing databases in mainland Australia.

Focus for 2024-2025

- Assessing the feasibility of implementing a worker screening system for Norfolk Island, consistent with other Australian jurisdictions for employment in child and disability care and support roles.
- Exploring the feasibility of Queensland providing parole and community corrections services to Norfolk Island.
- Continuing to support the implementation and enhancement of existing state-level services, including education, and apprenticeship and traineeships and health advisory services.
- Continuing to represent Queensland on the Norfolk Island Governance Committee.
- Exploring Queensland's role in the delivery of potential additional state-level services as identified by the Commonwealth and the Norfolk Island community.
- Leading a review of the IGA to ensure it reflects the evolving partnership and current arrangements between the parties regarding state-based service delivery and governance.

Department of Education

Services

Under the Education Service Schedule, the Department of Education (DoE) is responsible for education service provision and operation of Norfolk Island Central School (NICS).

Year in review

In 2023-24, DoE successfully achieved important milestones for effective education service delivery at NICS.

The Department of Education, through Darling Downs South West Region, invested in NICS staff capability to deliver programs responsive to students' needs.

What our stakeholders are telling us

The DoE's 2023 School Opinion Survey results indicated that NICS parents/caregivers agreed that teachers at NICS are interested in the wellbeing of students and are responsive and approachable. Parents and students agreed the school has high expectations for student learning outcomes, and this is celebrated within the school community, and that teachers motivate students to learn. Staff members agreed that they enjoy working at the school and receive useful feedback about their work. Survey groups agreed that the school seeks ways to continually improve.

Achievements

- Completed the Queensland delivery of the Higher School Certificate at NICS in 2023, with two students recognised in the Distinguished Achievers list for achieving the highest band (Band 6 or Band E4) in one or more courses.
- Commenced full transition to the Queensland delivery of the Australian Curriculum from Prep to Year 10 and the Queensland Curriculum and Assessment Authority senior curriculum in 2024.
- Enacted the DoE's vision, *Equity and Excellence in Everything We Do*, by supporting students in focusing on key points in their learning journey, leading to an increase in the percentage of NICS students achieving a C or above in English and Maths from Prep to Year 9.
- Developed a four-year NICS Strategic Plan collaboratively with the Norfolk Island community, prioritising Curriculum, Assessment and Moderation; Building Capability; and Vision, Systems and Communication.
- Supported Prep students in their transition to schooling with Banyan Park Early Learning Centre.
- Participated in DoE's School Review process in August 2023, leading to the publication of the report on the NICS website (see [here](#)).
- Commenced active case management of 2024 Year 12 students to ensure they are on track to successfully achieve either the Queensland Certificate of Education (QCE) or Queensland Certificate of Individual Achievement (QCIA) on graduation.
- Delivered *Norfolk* language from Prep to Year 10, with planning and assessment embedded in practice.
- Supported students in participating in extra-curricular activities and programs, including representative sports at both regional and state levels and the DoE's *STEM Girl Power* program. In addition, the school successfully advocated for inclusion in the *Go for Gold* and *Share the Dignity* programs.
- Supported teachers in their transition and relocation to Norfolk Island, ensuring that all classified teaching roles (school leadership and heads of program) were filled for the commencement of the 2024 year.

- Delivered a new network connection to the school in partnership with the Commonwealth Government, Norfolk Telecom and Telstra, as part of broader upgrade on island, providing students and teachers with greatly improved service.
- Published version 3 of the bespoke *NICS Policy and Procedures Manual* on the NICS website, encompassing all of the department's policies and procedures (see [here](#)).

Case Study – NICS Vocational and Education (VET) Pathways

NICS plays an important role in the career education and development of students, and has implemented activities to enhance student learning pathways, including development of Senior Education and Training (SET) Plans, offering work experience placements, and providing access to VET programs.

Year 10 students developed a SET Plan in consultation with their teachers and parents/carers. This process supported students in mapping their future pathway, including setting education goals and determining intended learning options.

Work experience provided students with opportunities to gain insights into local employment pathways, build their confidence, and link their learning to the world of work. In 2023, four Year 9 students, 24 Year 10 students, two Year 11 students and six Year 12 students participated in work experience placements.

Additionally, students were provided access to a range of learning options to suit their needs and career goals through Queensland VET delivery. These programs allowed students to gain employment-based training in their chosen industries, including electrotechnology, carpentry, beauty services, and mechanical trades. Four students progressing in either a school-based traineeship or apprenticeship travelled to TAFE Queensland campuses to complete block training, where their practical skills were supervised by TAFE Queensland experts.

Focus for 2024-2025

- Continuing to enhance teaching and learning practices at NICS through the implementation of the four-year NICS Strategic Plan and based on insights from the school review undertaken in August 2023.
- Continuing to embed the Australian Curriculum Version 9 to support students to become successful learners.
- Improving regional systems and processes to optimise support to NICS.
- Supporting successful outcomes and post-school transitions for students undertaking a QCE or QCIA pathway.
- Continuing to tailor the delivery of education services through a deeper understanding of the context and cohort of students enrolled at the school.
- Continuing to work collaboratively with the Commonwealth Government to ensure the best possible education for students on Norfolk Island.
- Working with a range of stakeholders to provide individualised referral pathways for students.

Queensland Health

Services

Queensland Health (QH) provides governance, strategic advice, policy, and funding arrangements to support the Norfolk Island community's access to quality state-level health services. This role is largely carried out by Metro North Hospital and Health Service (MNHHS), which facilitates safe and effective access to integrated healthcare services for Norfolk Islanders and provides advice and support to NIHRACS.

QH is committed to providing person-centred care to all outpatient consultations for Norfolk Islanders. A key aspect of this commitment is enabling access to care close to home through virtual care modalities (telehealth or telephone consultations) whenever possible, and in person in QH facilities when necessary.

As a service delivery partner, MNHHS predominantly provides these services; however, Norfolk Island residents may also be referred to services elsewhere in Queensland or nationwide.

Year in review

QH is committed to maintaining strong relationships with NIHRACS and the Norfolk Island community to ensure that health services remain responsive to community needs. The annual Health and Wellbeing Expo enabled MNHHS and NIHRACS staff to connect with the community, foster relationships, and highlight their role in delivering healthcare to Norfolk Island. MNHHS will continue this engagement to tailor health services and raise awareness of the range of health supports available, from prevention and primary care to specialist services and long-term care. MNHHS also continues to support NIHRACS in achieving its strategic and operational goals by sharing resources and fostering collaboration. Throughout the year, MNHHS actively supported NIHRACS across corporate and clinical domains. MNHHS continues to develop and implement tailored service models to drive improvements in clinical service delivery for Norfolk Island.

What our stakeholders are telling us

The Norfolk Island community shared positive feedback about their experience as healthcare consumers of MNHHS services, specifically highlighting the consistent, person-centred care and the clear, understandable delivery of health information. The NIHRACS team also valued MNHHS's clinical governance support and guidance, particularly as they prepared for accreditation against the [National Safety and Quality Health Service \(NSQHS\) Standards](#).

Achievements

- 1,396 Outpatient Specialist referrals were made to MNHHS, including:
 - 225 allied health referrals.
 - 273 inpatient admissions.
 - 70 surgical procedures.
- Delivered 1,646 outpatient appointments for Norfolk Islanders, including:
 - 730 in person at a MNHHS facility (44%).
 - 571 using telehealth (video conferencing) (35%).
 - 345 telephone consultations (21%).
- Carried out 57 medical evacuations via Retrieval Services Queensland, transferring 42 patients to MNHHS facilities and 15 to other Queensland hospitals (including private hospitals).
- Finalised and endorsed the following service proposals to allow additional services to be provided to the people of Norfolk Island:
 - Immunisation provision in alignment with Queensland and National Programs.

- Forensic pathology services.
- Adult speech pathology services.
- Paediatric advanced life support training.
- Provided peer support and guidance to NIHRACS in preparation for Australian Council of Healthcare Standards accreditation.
- Sustained annual fit testing and biotechnical servicing for NIHRACS equipment.
- Facilitated a fire safety engineering audit to provide Commonwealth and NIHRACS with recommendations to mitigate fire safety risks.

Case Study

The NSQHS Standards provide a nationally consistent statement about the level of care consumers can expect from healthcare services. Awarding accreditation to a health service organisation provides assurance to the community that the organisation meets expected patient safety and quality standards.

To support NIHRACS in its accreditation preparedness, MNHHS provided subject matter expertise and advice to NIHRACS and the Commonwealth on the NSQHS Standards.

MNHHS led a Clinical Governance Standard 1 workshop in January 2024 with attendees from NIHRACS, DPC, QH, and the Commonwealth.

Additional peer reviews and reports were undertaken by MNHHS against the following standards:

- Standard 3: Preventing and Controlling Infections and AS/NZS4187 Reprocessing of reusable medical devices.
- Standard 5: Comprehensive Care.
- Standard 8: Recognising and Responding to Acute Deterioration.

Throughout the year, MNHHS provided NIHRACS with a clear overview of the expectations and evidence required for the assessment of NIHRACS against the NSQHS standards, along with staff-specific education through in-service training. The MNHHS team was present before the NSQHS assessors arrived to offer collegial support, conduct environmental scanning, and provide practical support.

The NIHRACS leadership team expressed their appreciation for the support and strengthened relationships during the accreditation process. This case study highlights MNHHS's commitment to its core values of respect, integrity, compassion, high performance, and teamwork.

Focus for 2024-2025

- Establishing clinical visits on island to enhance care delivery as clinically appropriate, focusing on person-centred care.
- Reviewing the Health Service Delivery Schedule with key stakeholders to ensure it remains fit for purpose, as outlined in the Intergovernmental Partnership Agreement.
- Coordinating and co-designing Norfolk Island's five-year health plan, including conducting a health needs assessment through the MNHHS Public Health Unit.
- Assisting NIHRACS through accreditation and offering ongoing clinical governance assistance to transition to the Short Notice Assessment Accreditation Program (SNAAP).
- Expanding service delivery models to remaining specialty areas and co-designing integrated care pathways across the healthcare continuum for Norfolk Island community.
- Building partnerships with Norfolk Island community services.

Department of Employment, Small Business and Training and TAFE Queensland

Services

The Department of Employment, Small Business and Training (DESBT) (now the Department of Trade, Employment and Training), is responsible for the registration and support of apprenticeships and traineeships for Norfolk Island commencing from 1 January 2022. This service enables Norfolk Island residents to register full-time, part-time, and school-based apprenticeships and traineeships with the Queensland Government. TAFE Queensland delivers training for Norfolk Island in various industries and study areas.

Year in review

During the 2023-24 Financial Year, 21 apprentices and trainees on Norfolk Island were supported by Queensland, including those registered in previous financial years. These 21 apprenticeships and traineeships comprised four who completed, one who cancelled, and 16 who were yet to complete.

Eleven new apprentices and trainees were registered during the year under Queensland's Vocational Education and Training services for Norfolk Island. These registrations consisted of eight new full-time apprentices and three new school-based apprentices, in the occupational areas of meat retailing, carpentry, electrotechnology, and light vehicle mechanical.

At the end of the 2023-24 Financial Year, there were 16 active apprenticeships and traineeships, including 12 full-time apprentices, three school-based apprentices, and one school-based trainee. Eight (four full-time and four school-based) were registered to complete their training with TAFE Queensland in the industry areas of electrical, automotive, construction, refrigeration and air conditioning, and construction. The other eight apprentices and trainees were trained by TAFE New South Wales.

Training was provided by TAFE Queensland at its campuses, with additional virtual and online training options offered where appropriate. As Queensland's largest and most experienced training provider, TAFE Queensland is skilled at providing tailored services for remote communities. DESBT worked closely with Norfolk Island stakeholders, adjusting apprenticeship and traineeship processes to ensure the best fit for Norfolk Island.

Informed by advice received from Norfolk Island stakeholders, including Asuria (a Commonwealth Government contracted provider), changes to DESBT procedures aimed to enhance communication and processes between key stakeholders to ensure optimal outcomes for program participants.

In February 2024, DESBT and TAFE Queensland staff travelled to Norfolk Island to support commencement of three new school-based apprentices, conduct routine monitoring visits with two apprentices, and host a community 'walk-in' face-to-face Q&A session, in addition to other support provided during this visit.

What our stakeholders are telling us

DESBT continues to receive positive feedback on its collaborative approach to establishing and managing apprenticeship and traineeship registrations and support services for Norfolk Island through the Queensland Government. This included assisting TAFE NSW to finalise outstanding paperwork and obtain signatures from employers and apprentices to prevent delays with administering individual apprenticeships and traineeships and to ensure timely payment to service providers.

TAFE Queensland has also received positive feedback from the Norfolk Island community regarding training provided and the overall service. This included feedback on the support provided to students of all ages to help them overcome personal challenges (such as limited previous knowledge or experience) to assist them to pass all assessment items required under their apprenticeship or traineeship

Achievements

- Registered 11 new apprenticeships and traineeships, including three new school-based apprenticeships.
- Completed four apprenticeships, all successful in the occupation of carpentry.
- Provided a dedicated staff member from DESBT's South East Regional Office to support Norfolk Island apprenticeship and traineeship services.
- Provided a dedicated contact in TAFE Queensland to support Norfolk Island apprentices and trainees with off-the-job training enquiries.

Case Study – Supporting Norfolk Island Apprentices and Trainees

DESBT places special emphasis on raising awareness of the support services available to apprentices facing employment or personal challenges while undertaking their apprenticeship or traineeship. To this end, DESBT has held informal gatherings in a safe environment to inform apprentices about the free support available to them, such as referrals to appropriate service providers, government agencies, and community organisations. This support includes free 24/7 confidential counselling provided by DESBT through TELUS Health.

For example, DESBT jointly hosted a barbeque with TAFE NSW and the Australian Apprentice Connect Provider to support apprentices attending the TAFE NSW Kingscliff campus. At this event, apprentices gained greater awareness of the support available to them.

TAFE Queensland offers a range of support services to apprentices and trainees, which are communicated prior to attendance, along with campus maps and other essential information. Tailored support was provided to Norfolk Island residents to progress through their training and overcome challenges, including those unique to remote locations. A dedicated TAFE Queensland officer collaborated with apprentices and trainees, Asuria representatives, employers, and NICS to determine optimal training delivery methods to suit individual needs. This included determining the best training location for students attending training at TAFE Queensland campuses and considered preferred mainland location closer to family or friends.

Alternative training options provided included: online learning which allowed apprentices and trainees to participate in selected subjects without leaving Norfolk Island; recording tutorial sessions to address time difference issues; and sending learning resources via email for offline use to overcome online connectivity challenges.

Focus for 2024-2025

- Providing support to existing apprentices and trainees on Norfolk Island.
- Encouraging further uptake of apprenticeships and traineeships by Norfolk Island employers.
- Ongoing work with DoE and NICS to promote participation in school-based apprenticeships and traineeships.
- Continuing to consolidate and build on stakeholder networks to support the smooth operation of apprenticeships and traineeships on Norfolk Island.
- Ensuring that all students studying with TAFE Queensland are aware of and offered appropriate support to achieve their education and training goals.

Queensland Corrective Services

Services

Queensland Corrective Services is responsible for the provision of custodial services for Norfolk Island prisoners under the Custodial Services Schedule. The Custodial Services Schedule was finalised on 28 June 2024.

Focus for 2024-2025

- Standing up the operational and governance requirements for the accommodation of Norfolk Island prisoners in Queensland.
- Exploring the options and feasibility of Queensland's potential delivery of parole and community corrections services to Norfolk Island.
- Ongoing consultation and collaboration with relevant stakeholders.