



Darling Downs Health

Research Strategy

Darling Downs Health 2023 – 2028

6787.V1.00 | 09/2024

Version Control Information:

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Original document: November 2023 | Review due: December 2025



Research Strategy Vision, Aim and Objectives

Our vision

Through effective planning and sustained collaborations with key partners, Darling Downs Health will develop a vibrant research culture that:

- Supports Health Services staff to be effective consumers, participators, and generators of high-quality research.
- Strives to position Darling Downs Health to be a trusted and recognised specialist of innovative rural and regional health excellence which is evidenced in research.
- Supports the commitment of staff to drive and champion a culture of inquiry and research growth throughout the organisation.
- Enables the undertaking of globally recognised research that improves clinical care and the health of people within the Darling Downs.

Our Aim and Objectives

The overarching aim for this Research Strategy is to increase locally developed and relevant research activity in the health service. Increasing research activity at Darling Downs Health will depend on the following four broad objectives:

1. Grow and sustain our own research experts.
2. Enable environments, systems, and processes to support the expansion of research activity.
3. Develop our clinical trials capability.
4. Strengthen our research partnerships.

The Darling Downs Health Research Strategy identifies a range of priority actions and key activities to support the aim and objectives. It also recognises a commitment of collaboration across divisions is required to ensure sustainability and viability of activities. This Strategy is aligned with several key actions of the Darling Downs Health Strategy Plan 2023 – 2027 including 1.1; 1.3; 2.1; 2.6; 2.7;4.1; and 4.6.

Grow and sustain our own research experts.

Priority Actions	Key Activities	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5
Increase accessibility to research resources and support.	Embed research and knowledge translation expertise in service areas of strategic priority e.g. through conjoint appointments, honorary appointments, or research coordinator roles.					
	Reimagine and reinstate the research ambassador program to enable visibility of research processes and resources.					
	Identify ways to promote and deliver research resources and training that is accessible to our staff.					
Build the research capability of the Darling Downs Health workforce.	Invest in and promote training pathways for research for those starting out e.g., the Intensive Research Training Program.					
	Grow the research capability of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.					
	Investigate and implement opportunities to support staff to undertake Research Higher Degrees.					
	Recognise and enable opportunities for research career pathways for health service staff.					
Foster a vibrant research culture	Develop and implement a communication plan to promote research activity within the health service.					
	Investigate and implement opportunities to embed research accountabilities and expectations as business as usual.					
	Understand integral steps of enabling successful clinician researchers in a regional health service setting and use findings to grow local researchers.					
	Support our health service leaders to enable research activity.					
	Develop and enable robust supervision of junior researchers (e.g. medical trainees) through external partnerships and/or, support and development of our research leaders.					
	Monitor research culture over 5 years to recognise change and identify improvements required.					
Key Performance Indicators	<p>At least 2 new staff a year enrolled in a research higher degree.</p> <p>A 5% yearly increase in peer reviewed publications.</p> <p>At least 1 new research project a year lead by our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.</p> <p>Increase in positions with formal research component embedded in 5 years.</p>					

Enable environments, systems and processes to support the expansion of research activity.

Priority Actions	Key Activities	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5
Position research in master planning	Identify research infrastructure opportunities in future planning for growth in research activity including the integration of research in the future master planning of the Baillie Henderson Hospital campus.					
	Identify and brand physical space to accommodate growth in research activity including for the Research Development and Engagement Unit.					
	Plan and enable space availability for clinical trials expansion including pharmacy, pathology, medical imaging, and trials coordination.					
Invest in and enable access to technology and systems that will support research growth.	Build and maintain access to research data management systems and processes to enable safer data management locally and for collaboration.					
	Investigate and implement activities to ensure health service data is available and collected in a way that simplifies and enables research activity in line with the adoption of electronic medical records.					
	Develop and trial a service-wide database that facilitates connection between research interested staff and internal research opportunities.					
	Invest in and enable access to software and digital resources to support research activity.					
Establish effective financial processes to support growth of research activity.	Develop and implement a strategy that aims to establish an effective business model for increasing and demonstrating return on investment in research.					
	Investigate philanthropy programs to assist research expansion in the health service.					
	Recruit and appoint to key positions in research business management and analytics.					
Ensure that we have access to sufficient FTE and expertise in the Research Development and Engagement Unit to support the expansion of research activity.	Identify key roles for the Research Development and Engagement Unit including a prioritization plan for recruitment.					
	Develop a business case to support the strategic expansion of the Research Development and Engagement Unit.					
	Develop and recruit to roles.					
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financial processes for research developed and implemented by year 5. Sustained growth in research development and engagement unit appointments. Sufficient research space available by year 5. Technology and software to support research developed and in use. 					

Grow Our Clinical Trials Capability.

Priority Actions	Key Activities	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5
Enhance Financial Coordination of Clinical Trials	Confirm Clinical Trials fee schedule across different specialities at Darling Downs Health.					
	Centralise business management of clinical trials.					
	Progress the adoption of a clinical trials management system.					
Establish a coordinated Clinical Trials Hub recognised for both sponsored and investigator lead clinical trials at Darling Downs Health.	Implement the National Clinical Trials Governance Framework.					
	Develop and implement a plan to expand and sustain Clinical Trials activity in the health service.					
	Develop relationships with Clinical Trial units across other HHSs and states and take on strategies to learn and grow with best practice.					
	Confirm structure of Clinical Trials Hub including role gaps, and recruit to roles e.g., coordinators; clinical trials start up specialists; clinical trials assistance; clinical trials officers and scientists.					
	Promote Clinical Trials at Darling Downs Health to attract more industry-sponsored and competitive funding.					
Grow capability in tele-trials	Investigate opportunities to support tele-trials including drone capability.					
	Explore tele-trial capability at Kingaroy, Warwick and Dalby as satellite sites including identification of rural champions.					
	Scale up tele-trials and realise return on investment.					
Grow knowledge of clinical trials in the health service	Development and implement specialized clinical trials training programs for primary investigators, coordinators, emerging clinicians, consumers, and support services.					
	Establish career pathways for clinical trials staff.					
	Showcase achievements in clinical trials internally and externally.					
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Over 50 active clinical trials by 2027 Build the clinical trials portfolio at Darling Downs Health to 60% commercially sponsored studies and 40% collaborative group studies, and investigator-initiated studies by year 5. 					

Strengthen Our Research Partnerships.

Priority Actions	Key Activities	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4	Yr 5
Establishment of a physical research and education facility on the Baillie campus in collaboration with our partners.	<i>Ensure our staff and community are embedded in the design and vision of the facility.</i>					
	Collaborate with university partners to source possible funding options, develop timelines, and support this vision.					
	Ensure that research activity relevant to our staff is prioritized within the facility.					
Engage with community and consumers in research.	Establish a Consumer Research Advisory Group for priority populations to drive research opportunities.					
	Establish mechanisms to increase community awareness of research activity undertaken in the health service.					
	Enable and evaluate opportunities for consumers, research end users, and academic collaborators to come together to co-design research relevant to our local health needs.					
	Ensure appropriate research methodologies and approaches are utilised with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders communities through education and promotion including the recognition of data sovereignty for these communities.					
Strengthen strategic partnerships with our research partners	Support the evolution of Darling Downs Health and Innovation Research Collaborative (DDHIRC) to facilitate knowledge exchange and sharing of resources between research partners to maximize research impact.					
	Support opportunities for next generation clinicians to undertake research within our health service in order to develop a pipeline of clinical researchers with experience in regional and rural health research.					
	Establish an honorary appointment pathway at DDH with external academics to support our staff.					
	Establish conjoint research appointments across the professions with the academic partners.					
Key Performance Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resources and events for engaging consumers in research developed and adopted. At least one collaborative research grant realised each year. Research facility built on Baillie Henderson Campus. Number of honorary appointments made. Number of conjoint appointments. 					