



Thriving Lives, Connected Communities

*Queensland's Commitment
to Mental Health and Wellbeing*

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Thriving Lives, Connected Communities: Queensland's Commitment to Mental Health and Wellbeing was developed by Health and Wellbeing Queensland, in partnership with the Queensland Mental Health Commission, key stakeholders and the community. The Commitment responds to Recommendation 19 of the Mental Health Select Committee *Inquiry into the opportunities to improve mental health outcomes for Queenslanders* report.

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Acknowledgement

Recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples

We respectfully acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the Traditional Custodians of the lands, winds and waters where Queenslanders live, learn, work and play. We recognise Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples as the First Peoples of Australia, representing distinctly different groups with unique cultures, histories, knowledges and connections to Country. We pay our respects to, and acknowledge, Elders, past and present, as they hold the memories, traditions, cultures and aspirations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

We acknowledge any Sorry Business that may be affecting individuals, families, and communities. We acknowledge the ongoing impacts of colonisation and intergenerational trauma on the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and that this trauma is ongoing. We recognise and respect the common strengths demonstrated across Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. In particular, we recognise the resourcefulness and enduring resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, families and communities.

The Queensland Government is committed to achieving targets under the National Agreement on Closing the Gap, including health equity and attaining life expectancy parity by 2031, and ensuring children thrive in their early years. We will work together with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities and organisations in the journey to better health and social and emotional wellbeing.

Recognition of a multicultural and diverse Queensland

The Queensland Government's *Multicultural Recognition Act 2016* and Multicultural Queensland Charter (2017) is recognised and supported. The Commitment acknowledges the importance of supporting and developing the mental health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders.

Recognition of contributions

Thank you to all the individuals, organisations and peak bodies who participated in consultation sessions in person and online, and to those who provided written feedback. We acknowledge your experience and value your expertise, dedication, and commitment to better outcomes for Queenslanders.

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Message from the Premier

**The Honourable
Steven Miles MP**
Premier of Queensland

All Queenslanders deserve to live happy and fulfilling lives. Good mental health and wellbeing enables us to cope with the many challenges of everyday living, and helps build healthy, connected and resilient communities.

Thriving Lives, Connected Communities: Queensland's Commitment to Mental Health and Wellbeing aims to support the wellbeing of every Queensland. It recognises the need for a multifaceted approach at the individual, community and collective levels to improve mental health and wellbeing.

We know that various factors can influence mental health and wellbeing for different groups and communities, and at different stages of life. Whether you live in rural, regional or remote locations, are from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, are from LGBTQIA+ communities, are culturally and linguistically diverse, have a disability, or are a senior, child, or young person, your wellbeing matters.

Thriving Lives, Connected Communities has been shaped by your voices and builds on our current investment in mental health reform, including *Shifting minds: The Queensland Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs, and Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan 2023–2028* and *Better Care Together: A plan for Queensland's state-funded mental health, alcohol and other drug services to 2027*.

It is the first phase of a staged approach that will deliver on my Government's commitment to improving mental health and wellbeing outcomes, with the next phase to include a mental health and wellbeing strategy and action plan. We will continue to ensure your valuable insights and shared lived and living experiences shape the strategy and action plan as they develop.

This is a Commitment for every Queensland. We aim to enhance mental health and wellbeing, ensuring everyone can access the support they need.

I am proud to lead a government where mental health and wellbeing matters. It is what Queenslanders now and into the future need and deserve, and we are delivering on it.



Message from the Minister

**The Honourable
Shannon Fentiman MP**
Minister for Health,
Mental Health and
Ambulance Services
and Minister for Women

As the Minister for Health, Mental Health and Ambulance Services and Minister for Women, I am delighted to release *Thriving Lives, Connected Communities: Queensland's Commitment to Mental Health and Wellbeing*.

At a time when almost one in two Queenslanders will experience mental ill-health in their lifetime, it's never been more important to have a commitment that supports better mental health outcomes. *Thriving Lives, Connected Communities* outlines the path to help Queenslanders live fulfilling lives, and it focuses on holistic wellbeing as the foundation of good mental health.

One of the Commitment's key components is the release of the Mental Health and Wellbeing Grants, a new \$9 million grants program across three years, delivered by the Queensland Mental Health Commission.

This grassroots program will fund the delivery of local projects and initiatives to meet local community needs. Community groups and organisations can apply for up to \$150,000 to fund eligible initiatives to address community issues and challenges that impact mental health and wellbeing outcomes.

Communities are rich in diversity and local knowledge, and no one knows more about what's best for a community than the people who live there. This is a wonderful opportunity for real change at a community level to boost wellbeing and mental health outcomes.

Communities are the lifeblood of Queensland and good community outcomes are central to improving individual and collective wellbeing outcomes. The supporting grants program complements this understanding.

I commend Health and Wellbeing Queensland and the Queensland Mental Health Commission for leading the development of this Commitment, the first phase in developing a statewide mental health and wellbeing strategy. Consultation has occurred across the State to ensure we understand how to best support the wellbeing needs of our diverse populations, to improve mental health outcomes.

I thank each and every individual who provided feedback, shared their lived and living experiences of mental health and mental ill-health, and their valuable insights.

We listened, and this has ensured *Thriving Lives, Connected Communities*, and the subsequent strategy, can help meet the needs of all people living in Queensland.

I am committed to improving the lives and wellbeing of Queenslanders now and into the future, and *Thriving Lives, Connected Communities* is the first step forward in this journey.

Executive summary

Good mental health is essential for leading a happy and fulfilling life. It impacts how a person manages stress, relates to others, and makes decisions. Good mental health enhances a person’s capacity to overcome challenges and is crucial for maintaining balanced relationships and achieving personal and professional goals.

The need to prioritise wellbeing is becoming increasingly recognised. Maintaining high levels of wellbeing enhances mental health, with physical, mental, emotional, and social dimensions, all contributing to overall quality of life.^{1,2} For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, social and emotional wellbeing recognises that connection to land, sea, culture, spirituality, family and community impact wellbeing.³

Improving wellbeing in people with a diagnosed mental health condition makes recovery up to seven times more likely and more effective.⁴

Queensland is a great place to live, and home to a vibrant and diverse group of people. To ensure Queenslanders thrive, a commitment to mental health and wellbeing is needed that fosters healthy, connected communities, where mental health and wellbeing are promoted and supported, and that recognises how building wellbeing can improve mental health outcomes for all Queenslanders.

Insights reflected in this Commitment were gained through consultation, research and evidence, providing clear guidance on where to focus efforts to improve mental health and wellbeing.

This Commitment builds on, and enhances the foundations set by, other Queensland Government strategies that support mental health, such as *Shifting minds: The Queensland Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs, and Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan 2023–2028* and *Better Care Together: A plan for Queensland’s state-funded mental health, alcohol and other drug services to 2027*. It targets preventative approaches, promoting wellbeing, and early intervention practices.

It establishes the foundation for Australia’s first strategy that takes a deliberate wellbeing approach to help Queenslanders maintain or return to good mental health. By taking proactive measures at three levels—the individual, community and collective—improvements can be achieved.

Thriving Lives, Connected Communities: Queensland’s Commitment to Mental Health and Wellbeing is supported by an investment of \$4 million over three years for the development and early implementation of a mental health and wellbeing strategy.

For every \$1 spent on promotion, prevention and early intervention, there is a return of over \$8.⁵

This Commitment is the Queensland Government’s initial step as part of a phased approach to delivering a mental health and wellbeing strategy. Further phases will include a comprehensive cross-agency approach where strategy development is coupled with action planning.

These future phases will adopt the vision, purpose and driving principles outlined in this Commitment, which were developed with the community.

Vision

Healthy, connected communities where mental health and wellbeing are promoted, support is accessible, and all Queenslanders thrive.

Purpose

Embed holistic wellbeing approaches to improve the mental health and wellbeing of Queenslanders, building on the strengths of diverse communities and ensuring culturally safe approaches.


Driving principles




Collaboration
Combine the knowledge and strengths of communities, government, industry, and service providers to achieve collective goals.



Community-led
Embrace a community-led approach that adapts to community needs and contexts to promote and support mental health and wellbeing.



Inclusive, culturally safe and equitable
Recognise diverse needs, including language, culture, ability, gender, identity or location, while focusing on equity to support the needs of priority cohorts.



Evidence-informed and evidence generating
Decisions are made by incorporating both research findings and lived-living expertise, finding new and better ways to promote and support population mental health and wellbeing.



Self-determination
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the inherent right to make decisions about their own lives, communities, and futures.

What has informed this Commitment

The voices, expertise, and experiences of Queenslanders have directly shaped the approach to enhancing mental health and wellbeing in Queensland. Insights from consultations, combined with an extensive review of the literature and contemporary practices, are reflected in this Commitment.

Consultation and research

453 participants	70 written submissions and responses to the consultation draft received
15 formal consultation sessions in-person and online	811 articles analysed in the evidence review
17 targeted meetings with peak bodies and key government agencies	11 national and international strategies reviewed in-depth to inform approaches

Community sessions in

- Cairns
- Logan
- Ipswich
- Townsville
- South West Queensland
- Brisbane

Insights from diverse groups

- people with lived-living experience
- culturally and linguistically diverse communities
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- LGBTQIA+ people
- young people
- seniors
- people with disability

Photo courtesy of Health and Wellbeing Queensland

Policy context

Progress is already being made in Queensland to enhance mental health and wellbeing through holistic approaches and supports for individuals, families, and communities being delivered by a range of government departments and agencies.

The report of the Mental Health Select Committee *Inquiry into the opportunities to improve mental health outcomes for Queenslanders* reiterated the need to support efforts across the continuum of care to improve outcomes for Queenslanders. This included efforts in relation to promotion and prevention with Recommendation 19 stating that ‘the Queensland Government consider developing a population-based Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy that spans human services portfolios and aims to improve community mental health and wellbeing’. In response, the Queensland Government agreed to developing a culturally safe, population-based mental health and wellbeing strategy to improve the mental health and wellbeing of all Queenslanders.

This Commitment’s place in the policy landscape

This Commitment complements *Better Care Together: A plan for Queensland’s state-funded mental health, alcohol and other drug services to 2027*, which focuses on the specialist treatment system but also recognises the importance of population-based programs that promote and support health and wellbeing including for specific groups and across life stages, delivered in places where people live, learn, work and play.

It also takes forward *Shifting minds: The Queensland Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs, and Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan 2023–2028*, which focuses collective and coordinated mental health, alcohol and other drug, and suicide prevention reform across Queensland. It sets the vision and direction towards achieving a whole-of-community, whole-of-person and whole-of-system approach to mental health and wellbeing.

By taking a population approach to improving wellbeing, preventing mental ill-health, and promoting good mental health, this Commitment complements existing mental health and wellbeing strategies. It advocates for early intervention when risks present, and addresses social determinants as associated with inequity, stigma and discrimination, while bolstering protective factors.

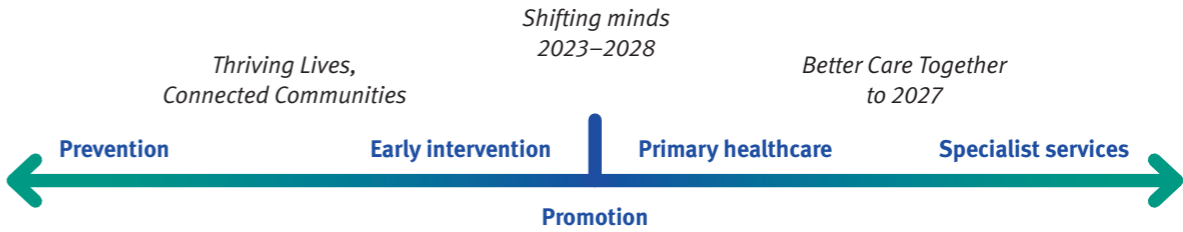


Photo courtesy of Queensland Department of Health

Embedding wellbeing and supporting good mental health in Queensland

Enhancing population mental health and wellbeing and reducing the impacts of mental ill-health requires action within and beyond the healthcare sector. It's crucial to understand and address the root causes of mental ill-health to create lasting change.

The environments in which people live, learn, work and play are influenced by various systems, such as education, healthcare, and government. Mental health is affected by the complex interactions of these systems and their impact on behaviours and wellbeing. Therefore, a systems approach is essential for achieving long-term impact.⁶

The Queensland Government is making significant investment to address social determinants and enhance the conditions in which Queenslanders live, learn, work and play.

Queensland Government initiatives

- *Achieving balance: The Queensland Alcohol and Other Drugs Plan 2022–2027*
- *Activate! Queensland: 2019–2029*
- *Better Care Together: A plan for Queensland's state-funded mental health, alcohol and other drug services to 2027*
- *Communities 2032 Strategy and Communities 2032 Action Plan 2022–25*
- *Community Support and Services Committee Report No. 14, 57th Parliament – Inquiry into social isolation and loneliness in Queensland, Queensland Government Response*
- *Creative Together 2020–2030: A 10-Year Roadmap for arts, culture and creativity in Queensland*
- *Domestic and Family Violence Prevention Strategy 2016–2026*
- *Every life: The Queensland Suicide Prevention Plan 2019–2029*
- *Future Directions for an Age-Friendly Queensland*
- *Gambling harm minimisation plan for Queensland 2021–25*
- *Good people. Good jobs: Queensland Workforce Strategy 2022–2032*
- *HEALTHQ32: A vision for Queensland's health system*
- *Homes for Queenslanders*
- *Leading healing our way: Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healing Strategy 2020–2040*
- *Making Healthy Happen 2032: A strategy for preventing obesity in Queensland*
- *Making Tracks Together – Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Equity Framework*
- *Mental Health Select Committee Report No. 1, 57th Parliament – Inquiry into the opportunities to improve mental health outcomes for Queenslanders, Queensland Government Response*
- *Our Place: A First Nations Housing and Homelessness Action Plan 2024–2027*
- *Our way: A Generational Strategy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families 2017–2037 and action plans*
- *Position Statement: Social Media and the Mental Health and Wellbeing of Young Queenslanders – Office of the Chief Health Officer*
- *Prevent. Support. Believe. Queensland's Framework to address Sexual Violence*
- *Queensland Alcohol and Other Drug Treatment Service Delivery Framework*
- *Queensland Corrective Services Mental Health Strategy 2022–2027*
- *Queensland Multicultural Policy: Our story, our future and Queensland Multicultural Action Plan 2024–25 to 2026–2027*
- *Queensland's commitment to the National Agreement on Closing the Gap*
- *Queensland's Disability Plan 2022–27: Together, a better Queensland*
- *Queensland's Path to Treaty Commitment*
- *Queensland's Plan for the Primary Prevention of Violence Against Women 2024–2028*
- *Queensland Women and Girls' Health Strategy 2032*
- *Regional mental health, alcohol and other drugs, and suicide prevention plans (developed by Primary Health Networks and Hospital and Health Services)*
- *Shifting minds: The Queensland Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs, and Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan 2023–2028*
- *Student Learning and Wellbeing Framework*
- *Toward Ending Homelessness for Young Queenslanders*

A wellbeing approach for the future

While significant investment has been made in Queenslanders’ mental health and wellbeing, it is recognised that more can be done. *Thriving Lives, Connected Communities* is a guide for future actions and new investment.

A **wellbeing approach** recognises that mental health is connected to various aspects of wellbeing, including physical, emotional, social, cultural, and environmental factors. This approach focuses on creating conditions that support overall wellbeing, addressing broader social determinants and, in turn, improving health outcomes, including mental health, for all.

Wellbeing supports good mental health outcomes by promoting positive health behaviours and physical health, and enhancing relationships. It promotes community engagement, and improves workforce participation, job performance and organisational productivity.

Photo courtesy of Health and Wellbeing Queensland



Wellbeing influences

There are many factors that influence wellbeing. The Wellbeing model shows that individual wellbeing outcomes contribute to community wellbeing, which in turn benefits society (known as the collective). The reverse relationship is also true. Within each level the key factors that contribute to wellbeing are listed.

It is important to create the conditions that underpin good mental health and wellbeing. Within communities, this may include having spaces and places that everyone can enjoy, where diversity is valued, and people can access support. Future actions to improve population level mental health and wellbeing should include tailored approaches across all three levels, considering a broad range of factors.

Move and Measure It!

In July 2024, the ‘Physical Activity Cascade of Care – Move and Measure It!’ was launched. This initiative supports health professionals to guide community members towards online resources that support them to increase their physical activity levels and improve their mental health and wellbeing.

Social isolation and loneliness

Queensland communities said that connection with others is one of the most important things to support mental health and wellbeing. Queenslanders often feel very lonely or isolated.⁷ Social isolation and loneliness levels peaked in 2020–21 during COVID-19 and are yet to return to pre-pandemic levels. Connection and inclusion are social determinants that the Queensland Government is already addressing through strategies such as *Communities 2032*. The Queensland Government’s response to the *Inquiry into social isolation and loneliness in Queensland* highlights the multi-faceted nature of the response across several areas of Government.

Figure 1: Wellbeing model



Protective and risk factors

Understanding protective and risk factors is the basis of mental health and wellbeing literacy, and key to driving future positive mental health and wellbeing outcomes.⁸

	Protective factors	Risk factors
Social	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economic security• Stable and affordable housing• Support for inclusion and diversity• Access to support services• Access to transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stigma, discrimination and racism• Financial insecurity• Impacts of climate change• Pollution and environmental degradation• Lack of access to support services• Health emergencies
Life events	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Support available at critical times	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Extreme weather and natural disasters• Forced migration• Experience of trauma• Unemployment• Homelessness• Grief and loss• Stressful life events• Interaction with the justice system
Community	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Safety• Positive school environment• Community infrastructure• Psychosocial safety in the workplace• Social connection and belonging• Connection to culture and land	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poor school environment• Poor work environment• Psychosocial hazards in the workplace• Racism and discrimination• Bullying• Lack of trust• Social isolation and social exclusion
Relational	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Secure attachment with significant carers• Social support	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Child abuse and neglect• Intimate partner violence and family violence• Bullying and cyberbullying• Loneliness• Being a carer
Individual	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Mental health literacy• Regular physical activity• Diet that meets nutritional and social needs• Limited screen time• Good sleep quality• Improving brain health• Sense of purpose• Financial security	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Poor physical health• Limited mental health knowledge• Physical inactivity• Low quality diet• Poor sleep quality• Excess screen time• Smoking and vaping• Problematic alcohol and/or drug use• Job stress and burn out• Debt and financial stress

Priority cohorts

The factors that influence mental health and wellbeing are different for different groups and communities. A number of cohorts in Queensland experience inequitable outcomes. Future action should aim to address these inequities.



Culturally and linguistically diverse communities, including refugees and people seeking asylum (CALD)

Facts: Queensland is home to over 190 languages and more than 110 religious beliefs from 220 countries.

Refugees and asylum seekers are at greater risk of mental health challenges than the general Australian population.⁹

Opportunities

- Addressing stigma, racism and discrimination
- Building culturally safe and appropriate supports, with communities
- Building mental health and wellbeing literacy

People with disability

Facts: 1 in 5 Queenslanders have a disability.

Up to 36 per cent of people with disability self-reported a diagnosed mental health condition compared with 8.7 per cent of people without disability.¹³

Opportunities

- Focusing on accessibility needs including the integration of technology
- Addressing social isolation through community connections
- Improving system navigation

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Intersex, Asexual, plus (LGBTQIA+) communities

Facts: Promoting mental health and wellbeing enables LGBTQIA+ people to develop healthy self-esteem and resilience and feel safe in all communities.¹⁰

LGBTQIA+ individuals are more than twice as likely as heterosexual men and women to have a mental health disorder in their lifetime.¹¹

Opportunities

- Addressing stigma and discrimination
- Building safe and appropriate supports, with communities

People working in the agricultural sector

Facts: There are 13,000 primary producers across Queensland.

The top three factors impacting farmer mental health were weather or natural disasters (47 per cent), financial stress (36 per cent) and inflation and cost pressures (35 per cent).¹⁴

Opportunities

- Collaborating and connecting with industry, and building specialised supports in the community
- Enhancing natural disaster relief

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities

Facts: In Queensland over 237,000 people identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander.

One in four Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people report having a mental health condition.¹²

Opportunities

- Building culturally appropriate social and emotional wellbeing supports, with communities
- Addressing stigma, racism and discrimination

People living in rural, regional and remote communities

Facts: Over 17 per cent of Queensland’s population reside in rural and remote areas. This is the highest population living outside a capital city in Australia.

Regions have lower levels of wellbeing than cities.¹⁵

Opportunities

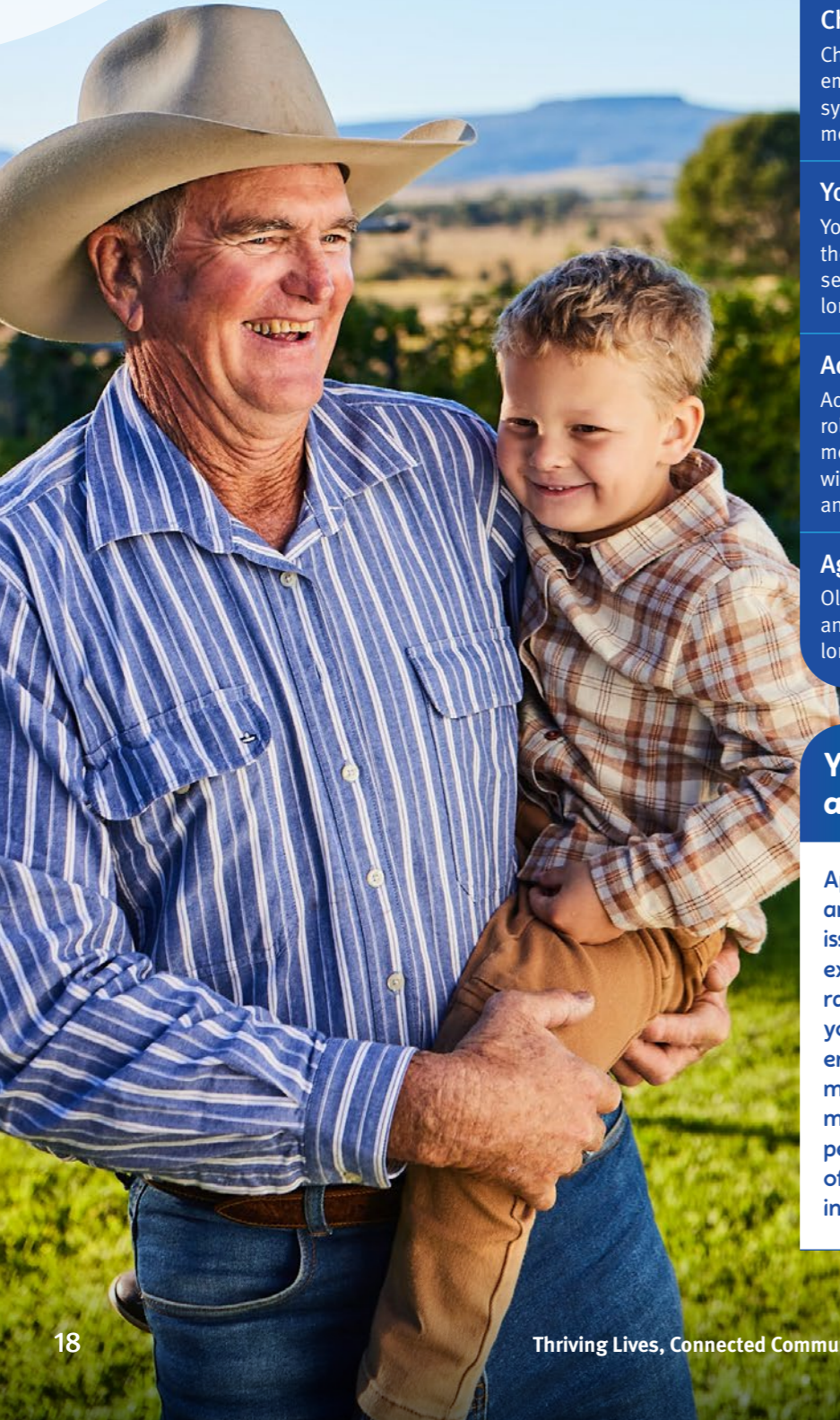
- Building local approaches with communities to support wellbeing
- Considering accessibility options
- Enhancing natural disaster relief

Intersectionality

Identities are interconnected and cannot be examined in isolation. This is ‘intersectionality’. Individuals often navigate multiple identities and social contexts simultaneously, influencing experiences of stigma, discrimination, access to resources, and mental health outcomes.

Life stages and transitions

The influence of protective and risk factors can shift at different life stages. Equally, the transition between life stages, such as childhood to adolescence, can be critical. It is important to understand how this influences a person’s mental health and wellbeing. Future actions to improve mental health and wellbeing should consider approaches that target specific life stages and the key transitions between them.



Early years

The first 2000 days of a child’s life is a crucial window to support healthy development and establish healthy behaviours among families, leading to improved mental health and wellbeing outcomes.

Childhood

Childhood is a critical period for social and emotional development and our education system has a key role to play in promoting mental health and wellbeing in this life stage.

Youth

Youth is when individuals explore and solidify their identities, which can significantly impact self-esteem and social interactions, influencing long-term mental health and wellbeing outcomes.

Adulthood

Adulthood involves transitioning through various roles (such as becoming a parent, caregiver or mentor), balancing responsibilities and coping with life changes, which can affect mental health and wellbeing.

Ageing

Older people face heightened mental health and wellbeing risks including declining health, loneliness and social isolation.

Young Queenslanders are a priority

Approximately one fifth of the population are 12–24 years old. Mental health issues are a key concern for, and are experienced at a disproportionate rate by, this age group.¹⁶ Empowering young people, fostering supportive environments, and providing coping mechanisms contributes to improved mental health and wellbeing. Young people also emphasised the importance of connections in different environments, including online.

Photo courtesy of Health and Wellbeing Queensland

Key settings

Settings play a critical role in people’s mental health and wellbeing. Key settings can change based on a person’s intersectional identity, age and life stage. The places where people frequently interact significantly influence their mental health and wellbeing. This Commitment emphasises the need to promote and support mental health and wellbeing in everyday settings—where people live, learn, work, and play.



Photo courtesy of Health and Wellbeing Queensland

Schools

Schools play a critical role in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of Queensland school students. The Department of Education’s *Student Learning and Wellbeing Framework* assists schools to implement a whole school approach to supporting students’ wellbeing and mental health—from broad promotion and prevention approaches to targeted responses.

Students with good mental health can be up to 2.8 years ahead of their peers by Grade 9.¹⁷

Workplaces

Creating mentally safe and healthy environments in workplaces can improve creativity, productivity, employee satisfaction and retention. The *Managing the risk of psychosocial hazards at work Code of Practice 2022* is an approved code of practice and regulation under the *Work Health and Safety Act 2011* and is intended to prevent harm from psychosocial risk. Compliance with the Code is a legislative requirement, and following the risk management process within the Code can support mentally healthy workplaces.

Workplaces that support the wellbeing of their staff experience three times less absenteeism and an average return of \$2.30 in improved productivity for every \$1 invested.¹⁸

Collective wellbeing

Collaborate across systems and sectors to drive a shared commitment to mental health and wellbeing, creating the conditions that enable Queenslanders to thrive.

Improving collective mental health and wellbeing across Queensland requires systems-level action to influence the broader social, economic and environmental conditions that impact population mental health and wellbeing.

What the community told us

- A systems approach is needed so everyone is working together to address social determinants and inequities.
- Queenslanders value kindness and a society where the health and happiness of individuals and families is prioritised by government and supported through connected, diverse and accepting communities.
- Clear accountability is required through strong leadership and a monitoring framework that is informed by Government and key stakeholders.
- More wellbeing research is needed to inform planning, decision-making, policy and practice.
- Reduce stigma and discrimination across communities and across systems.

Where to focus

- Adopt joint leadership and whole-of-government approaches.
- Reduce stigma and discrimination, and enhance community safety, through collective efforts.
- Prioritise mental health and wellbeing research and evaluation.

“ This ain't a job for one fella or one mob. We gotta work together, share what works for us, across all the different parts of government, like a big huntin' party workin' as one. We gotta be strong in our culture, strong in our connection to Country, and strong in our lookin' after each other. That way, we can build a Queensland where everyone can flourish, like a big gum tree reachin' for the sun. Now that's somethin' worth fightin' for, together.

*Uncle Mark Robson
– Elder, Wiradjuri Nation*

Commitment

Under *Better Care Together: A plan for Queensland's state-funded mental health, alcohol and other drug services to 2027*

- \$29.3 million for alcohol and other drug initiatives beyond the health system under *Achieving balance*.
- \$10 million to expand the existing Work Skills Traineeships program under Skilling Queenslanders for Work, with project proposals to create job opportunities for people experiencing mental health, alcohol and other drug issues.
- \$11.5 million to support the implementation of *Every life* Phase Two.
- \$10 million for approaches to reduce stigma and discrimination associated with mental ill-health, alcohol and other drug issues and eating disorders, including a social marketing campaign and capacity and capability building initiatives in key audiences and settings across Queensland.
- \$10 million to improve access to secure and affordable housing:
 - Focused tenancy sustainment support for tenants with multiple complex support needs living in social housing, partnering with the housing and homelessness sector in identified locations.
 - Tenancy sustainment support for people with mental health challenges and problematic alcohol and other drug use, including First Nations people.
 - Housing Worker to support young people exiting physical and mental health treatment to identify immediate housing and support needs and link them with those supports.

Under *Putting Queensland Kids First*

- \$9 million for housing and holistic support for pregnant and parenting mothers.
- \$11.6 million to support tenancies for young parents with wraparound support including parenting education.
- \$3.6 million for housing and support link services for young mothers, babies, and families.

Under Queensland's commitment to the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*

- \$3.1 million over 4 years to strengthen the sector, including funding to the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Coalition.
- \$11.8 million to prepare for the Truth-telling and Healing Inquiry, including:
 - \$6.3 million to help community members to tell their story and support staff wellbeing.
 - \$5.5 million over 3 years for research and archival specialists.

Under the *Queensland Women and Girls' Health Strategy 2032*

- \$6.84 million for a statewide model of affirming care for LGBTQIA+, Sistergirl and Brotherboy communities, delivered through a combination of face-to-face, online and telehealth, providing targeted support for LGBTQIA+ people with physical and mental ill-health and associated reduced psychosocial functioning.



Community wellbeing

Strengthen communities to positively impact mental health and wellbeing through promotion, prevention, and early intervention.

Communities play a central role in shaping our overall wellbeing. Strong, safe and inclusive communities foster a sense of belonging, provide opportunities for participation, help create meaning and purpose, and are often well placed to address the mental health and wellbeing needs of individuals.

“ Nothing for us, without us. ”

Culturally and linguistically diverse consultation participant

What the community told us

- Communities are diverse and require unique, community-led responses.
- Connection to family, community, land, culture, and spirituality, is an essential component of wellbeing, especially for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
- Creating safe and inclusive environments is important.
- Mental health and wellbeing initiatives in the places where people live, learn, work and play need to be available and accessible.
- Schools and educational settings play a key role in promoting wellbeing.
- A focus on wellbeing needs to be emphasised for workplaces.
- Community centres and recreational hubs that allow physical activity and socialising are valued by young people.
- Social and community groups can address social isolation and loneliness, especially for older people.

Where to focus

- Build community capacity to enhance place-based community support for mental health and wellbeing, including:
 - approaches to combat social isolation and loneliness, and
 - accessible supports after natural disasters and other adverse events.
- Increase community awareness of stigma and discrimination.
- Support mental health and wellbeing in key settings such as education and workplace settings.

Workplace mental health and wellbeing initiatives

As part of the Queensland Government's Work Well program, more than 200 businesses have implemented mental health and wellbeing initiatives, positively impacting over 50,000 employees. These programs have led to increased awareness and support for mental health in the workplace.

Arts in Health

To improve the mental health and wellbeing of staff and the community in the Bundaberg region, Arts Queensland is partnering with Wide Bay Hospital and Health Service on an 'Arts in Health' pilot, acknowledging the role arts and creativity play in place-based responses and reducing isolation.

“ People want purpose and connection—success is creating spaces for people to do what is important. ”

Brisbane consultation participant

Community wellbeing Commitment

Community wellbeing

Under Queensland's commitment to the *National Agreement on Closing the Gap*

- \$8.1 million over 4 years to help Close the Gap and improve outcomes for First Nations Queenslanders, including:
 - \$6.4 million in 2024–25 to continue wellbeing and community safety programs and support.
 - \$1.7 million over 2 years to continue the Doomadgee Place-based Partnership and related programs.

Under the *Queensland Women and Girls' Health Strategy 2032*

- \$2.33 million for non-government organisations to deliver peer support group programs with a focus on women's health conditions including endometriosis, menopause and cancer.
- \$2.96 million to trial a health education program in upper primary school about puberty, menstruation, health and wellbeing for girls.

Under *Better Care Together: A plan for Queensland's state-funded mental health, alcohol and other drug services to 2027*

- \$8 million for activities that contribute to improving quality of training and professional development for the lived-living experience (peer) workforce in the non-Government sector and build peer workforce capability in rural and remote areas, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and the alcohol and other drugs sector.
- \$2.38 million to deliver culturally safe, community-led suicide prevention initiatives in First Nations communities in Far North Queensland.

Photo courtesy of Deadly Choices

Under *Putting Queensland Kids First*

- \$5.4 million to support Neighbourhood Centres to combat the effects of isolation and loneliness.

Under *Activate! Queensland 2019–2029*

- \$0.75 million over three years, in partnership with the Queensland Mental Health Commission, to support the Hawthorn Football Club Northern Nest initiative to deliver programs in the Cairns region. Commencing in 2024, it will target over 900 children and young people during the AFLW rounds played in Cairns, incorporating a mental health and resilience program.
- \$6.76 million across the 2023–2024 and 2024–2025 financial years to deliver the Youth Development Partnership Fund, in collaboration with the Queensland Police Service, which invests in sport and active recreation initiatives to divert at risk youth from offending, and improve their physical and mental health.

Through Health and Wellbeing Queensland, Queensland's prevention agency

- \$10.5 million for targeted prevention programs that promote wellbeing, including *10,000 Steps*, *Deadly Choices* and the *Queensland Country Women's Association Country Kitchens*. These programs are targeting protective factors such as physical activity and nutrition, and priority cohorts such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and regional, rural and remote communities.

New investment for Queensland communities

The Queensland Government is investing \$9 million, over 3 years, in community grants, to fund initiatives aimed at enhancing wellbeing and supporting good mental health.

The 'Mental Health and Wellbeing Grants' will be administered by the Queensland Mental Health Commission and is an initiative that will support community wellbeing. It will also build on strategic priorities in *Shifting minds: The Queensland Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs, and Suicide Prevention Strategic Plan 2023–2028*.

The Queensland Government recognises the importance of investing in the promotion of wellbeing to enhance mental health. This includes strengthening approaches that consider the conditions in which people live, learn, work and play.

This grants program will build on existing community strengths, abilities and knowledge to develop and implement innovative, place-based solutions that meet local needs. To foster equitable outcomes, the grants will fund initiatives that meet the needs of priority cohorts such as:

- people living in rural, regional and remote communities,
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples,
- children, young people and older people,
- LGBTQIA+ people,
- people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds including refugees and asylum seekers,

- people who experience complex socio-economic circumstances and other vulnerabilities (e.g. homelessness, domestic and family violence, interaction with the justice system), and
- carers and supporters of people with lived experience of mental ill-health, problematic alcohol and other drug use, and suicidality.

Collaborative partnerships between social services, businesses, health services, and community organisations will be encouraged, and eligible applicants will be able to apply for a one-off grant of up to \$150,000 for initiatives that:

- support and promote mental health and wellbeing,
- prevent mental ill-health through enhancing protective factors and reducing risk factors,
- encourage early help seeking, or
- improve mental health, wellbeing, alcohol and other drugs or suicide prevention literacy and understanding.

This grants program will play an important role in enhancing community capacity to support mental health and wellbeing.

Individual wellbeing

Equip Queenslanders to support their own mental health and wellbeing, and that of others.

Equipping and empowering individuals to strengthen their own wellbeing, foster strong connections, and support the wellbeing of others matters. Efforts to improve individual mental health and wellbeing need to be holistic and include the broader family unit. There is a requirement for accessible, flexible, person-led and trauma-informed responses that respect the human rights and dignity of all individuals.

“ People experience wellbeing differently.
Cairns consultation participant

What the community told us

- Individuals want to know what keeps them well, how to recognise signs of becoming unwell and how to find support.
- Early intervention and prevention strategies targeting the early years are important.
- Everyone is different, and consideration of accessibility, diversity, equity, cultural inclusivity, and cultural appropriateness must be prioritised.
- Family connections are an important cornerstone of wellbeing.
- Individual wellbeing is the result of safety, security and having basic needs and rights met.
- Approaches that focus on physical activity as a key protective factor for mental health and wellbeing should be fostered.

Where to focus

- Build individual and family mental health and wellbeing literacy.
- Assist individuals and families to navigate to supports.

Dear Mind

The 'Dear Mind' campaign will shift focus from 2025 to support young Queenslanders (aged 15–17) to actively engage in protective mental wellbeing behaviours and activities, to build resilience and manage their mental health and wellbeing into adulthood.

“ Many people lack the mental health literacy to recognise when they're starting to become unwell and how to seek help.

Online consultation participant

Individual wellbeing

Commitment

Under *Better Care Together: A plan for Queensland's state-funded mental health, alcohol and other drug services to 2027*

- \$6.16 million for a culturally responsive, multi-agency pilot that delivers an assessment, case management and family support program targeting young people under 18 years with neuro-developmental or intellectual disability and who are in contact with the criminal justice system.

Under the *Queensland Women and Girls' Health Strategy 2032*

- \$12.11 million to provide therapeutic counselling and support for women and girls' mental health and wellbeing in partnership with community-based providers, including support for miscarriage, stillbirth and neonatal death.
- \$26.95 million to provide funding for social workers to provide mental health support for vulnerable women, including women experiencing domestic and family violence, and sexual violence.
- \$6.58 million to provide information and clinical advice via 13 HEALTH phone and online channels to increase access to women-centred information and to direct women and girls to local services, including referrals for counselling.

Under *Putting Queensland Kids First*

- \$65.52 million to expand health home visiting to more families and children who need it most, responding to the needs of local families and building strong connections with communities and local services.
- \$4.1 million to expand the Connecting2U program for Queensland families during pregnancy and extending to five years, with prompts and strategies to support healthy development, parental wellbeing, community connections and information about where to access support if they need it.
- \$11.09 million to provide access to bundles of essentials for parents experiencing adversity, including those at risk of homelessness, housing stress, domestic and family violence, trauma, relationship breakdowns and unplanned pregnancies.
- \$10.4 million to enhance mental health support for parents, partners and families.
- \$2 million to strengthen family connections through an early intervention program for families experiencing complex challenges.

Photo courtesy of Health and Wellbeing Queensland

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