



POLICY PRIORITY

CAIRNS HOSPITAL

PROPONENT:	Advance Cairns
COUNCILS:	All Tropical North Queensland
STATE ELECTORATES:	All Tropical North Queensland
FEDERAL ELECTORATES:	Leichhardt / Kennedy



CURRENT FOCUS

State Government commitment to expand and add more services to Cairns Hospital with the aim of achieving designation as a full-service Tertiary Referral University Hospital (level 6) within the next 5 years.

ISSUE

Expanded services and a qualified and comprehensive health workforce at Cairns Hospital are critical for the health needs of this region's growing population.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Queensland Government commits to expand and add more services to Cairns Hospital with the aim of achieving designation as a full-service Tertiary Referral University Hospital (level 6) within the next 5 years.

OVERVIEW

Over the past 2 years services at the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service (CHHS) have significantly expanded to include:

- locally based urology services
- a new adolescent ward
- 24-hour availability of the cardiac catheter laboratory
- an expanded intensive care unit
- a dedicated stroke service
- increased cancer care services

Cairns Hospital is now delivering its highest level of care and has the infrastructure required to satisfy designation as a full service tertiary referral university hospital (level 6), however there is an urgent need to expand the Mental Health Unit, increase surgical capacity (outpatients, preadmission clinic and operating theatre time) and consider the cost benefits of providing locally based service for currently exported services (e.g. neurosurgery, cardiac electrophysiology and cardiac surgery) to cater for regional demand with appropriate fiscal responsibility.

The availability of a qualified and comprehensive health workforce will be critical for the health needs of a growing population in this region in the coming decades. It would help deliver on the "Closing the Gap" priorities and meet the needs of some of the most socioeconomically disadvantaged people in Queensland.

With the expansion of the tertiary training medical footprint in Tropical North Queensland, particularly by James Cook University (JCU), there is growing support to justify the development of Cairns Hospital in becoming a university hospital.

The Memorandum of Understanding between Northern Queensland Primary Health Network and JCU to establish the Tropical Australian Academic Health Centre (TAAHC) recognises the unique opportunity to



create a world leading academic health centre with a focus on tropical health, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and the provision of services in regional, rural and remote settings.

While unique in content, the TAAHC reflects well established models of academic health centres overseas. By embedding research into health service delivery, TAAHC aims to improve quality and efficiency of care, enhance recruitment and retention of professionals in the region and encourage greater investment in the north.

The TAAHC will develop a region-wide strategy for patient centred research that identifies existing gaps in service delivery, as well as opportunities to improve quality and safety of care, and to develop new therapeutics and interventions. It will significantly enhance the ability of TNQ to compete with other parts of Australia for funding that will benefit the health of our local populations.

PROJECT LOCATION

Cairns

CONTACT

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Advance Cairns' Infrastructure and Policy Priorities are developed in collaboration with leading regional advocates. They are regularly reviewed and updated.