

Message from the BLMA President



Dr Hasthika Ellepola

Welcome to Issue 16 of the BLMA newsletter, Synapse. I hope you enjoy this edition.

We would like to extend our thanks to the contributors whose articles keep us informed about programs, current topics, and solutions to challenges we all face. Through their contributions, we continue to gain valuable knowledge and insights.

We remain committed to delivering an even better Synapse with every issue. The publication is highly regarded and widely circulated in both e-format and print. Your feedback is always valued—if there are topics you'd like to see featured, please let us know via our secretariat at info@brisbanelma.org. Similarly, if you'd like to contribute an article, please get in touch.

Since our last issue, we've hosted two highly successful educational dinners (see page 18), including an event dedicated to our Doctors-in-Training cohort.

Our events continue to be in high demand and often reach capacity before the RSVP date. We have five events left for the year—please mark these dates in your diaries and ensure you register your attendance when registrations open:

- ▶ 12 June 2025 – Queensland Cricketers' Club
- ▶ 5 August 2025 – Factory 51
- ▶ 10 September 2025 – The Glen Hotel (Doctors-in-Training exclusive event)

- ▶ 14 October 2025 – Water's Edge
- ▶ 28 November 2025 – The Greek Club

Our membership is growing rapidly, with many new Doctors joining us from a variety of specialties. This diversity is both exciting and enriching. At BLMA, we also value the membership and wisdom of our soon-to-retire and already-retired colleagues.

I'm also delighted to announce our upcoming Medico-Legal and Clinical Risk Management Educational Evening in August which is being hosted in conjunction with Avant.. As busy clinicians, it is essential for us to focus on patient safety and clinician well-being—both key components of holistic care that we will address at this event.

Lastly, if you appreciate what BLMA provides for our members, please share it with your colleagues. We welcome doctors from all specialties and at all stages of their careers. For a modest membership subscription, attendees not only enjoy high level educational updates from experts in their fields, valuable networking opportunities, CPD points and delicious meals!

Warm regards,
Dr. Hasthika Ellepola
President, Brisbane Local Medical Association

IN THIS ISSUE

- 1 Message from the BLMA President
- 4 Your 2025 Management Committee
- 6 Unlock Your Potential: Future-Proof Your Medical Career with Coaching
- 8 Letter to the Editor
- 9 Omega-3 Facts and Fantasy - a Fishy Tale
- 10 Metro North Health General Practice Liaison Officer
- 12 Morningside Family Medical Centre celebrates their QI success
- 14 AMA Queensland President and CEO Update
- 16 Discover a New Way to Travel with By Invitation
- 18 BLMA Event Wrap up
- 20 BLMA Advertising Kit 2025

CONTACTS

President:
Dr Hasthika Ellepola

Vice President:
Dr Andrew Cronin

Treasurer:
Dr Manoj Bhatt

Secretary:
Dr Felicity Jensen

Committee Member and Deputy Newsletter Editor:
Dr Dilip Dhupelia

Committee Member and Website/Social Media Editor:
Dr Janet Draper

Committee Member:
Dr Jennifer Schafer

Committee Member:
Dr Gail Tsang

Doctor in Training Committee Member and Newsletter Editor:
Dr Herjot Gill

Doctor in Training Committee Member:
Dr Bruce Wang

Doctor in Training Committee Member:
Dr Holly Dignan

For general enquiries and all editorial or advertising contributions and costs, please contact:

Renee O'Brien
Email: info@brisbanelma.org
Phone: 07 3872 2248

The Brisbane Local Medical Association welcomes contributions from members, especially "Letters to the Editor".

Please address all correspondence to:
Dr Herjot Gill
Email: info@brisbanelma.org

Issue 17 | 2025 Newsletter

Content Deadline:
Friday 4 July 2025

- ▶ Would you like to comment or suggest articles to be published?
- ▶ What would you like to see in the newsletter?

Our circulation via email, online and by post, reaches medical practitioners all over Brisbane!

Contact: Dr Dilip Dhupelia
Email: info@brisbanelma.org



Are You a Member?

If you are not a member, please complete the application available on our website:



info@brisbanelma.org

Enquiries: Dr Manoj Bhatt
drmkbhatt@yahoo.co.uk

Are you listed on the Members Only Directory on our website? Are your details correct?

Directory form is available on the website.

Disclaimer: The views expressed by the authors or articles in 'Synapse: Newsletter of the Brisbane Local Medical Association' are not necessarily those of the Brisbane Local Medical Association Inc. The Brisbane Local Medical Association Inc. accepts no responsibility for errors, omissions or inaccuracies contained therein or for the consequences of any action taken by any person as a result of anything contained in this publication.

BLMA is proudly supported by our partners:



Synapse: Newsletter dates 2025

Newsletter Month	Content Due	Distribution
July	Friday 4 July	Late July
September	Monday 1 September	Late September
November	Monday 3 November	Late November



Visit our website

brisbanelma.org

Keep up to date with latest news and BLMA events at your fingertips!

Follow BLMA on:

Facebook



Instagram



Your 2025 Management Committee



President:
Dr Hasthika Ellepola



Vice President:
Dr Andrew Cronin



Treasurer:
Dr Manoj Bhatt



Secretary:
Dr Felicity Jensen



**Committee Member
and Deputy
Newsletter Editor:**
Dr Dilip Dhupelia



**Committee Member
and Website/Social
Media Editor:**
Dr Janet Draper



Committee Member:
Dr Jennifer Schafer



Committee Member:
Dr Gail Tsang



**Doctor in Training
Committee Member and
Newsletter Editor:**
Dr Herjot Gill



**Doctor in Training
Committee Member:**
Dr Bruce Wang



**Doctor in Training
Committee Member:**
Dr Holly Dignan





**IMAGING
QUEENSLAND**



Radiology Reinvented

**the evolution of
our imaging services**

**CitiScan Radiology is now operating as
Imaging Queensland providing three convenient locations:**

-  **Deception Bay:** Deception Bay Market Square
-  **Margate:** 287 Oxley Drive
-  **Brisbane:** Level 2, 141 Queen Street

Same Great Team More Locations More Services Stronger Together

X-Ray | Ultrasound | CT | MRI | Nuclear Medicine | Mammography

Excellence in Diagnostics

1300 648 958

imagingqueensland.com.au





Unlock Your Potential: Future-Proof Your Medical Career with Coaching

Medicine is both a privilege and a challenge. Every day, doctors make high-stakes decisions, navigate ethical dilemmas, and manage relentless demands. While most doctors are resilient, this pressure can lead to exhaustion, self-doubt, and even burnout. Coaching offers a proactive, evidence-based approach to help doctors not only cope but thrive.

Medicine: High Standards, Higher Pressures

Doctors are expected to be infallible—adapting to medical advances, handling emergencies, and maintaining clinical excellence. Yet, the culture of medicine discourages vulnerability, making it difficult to seek support. The best doctors are not those who push through exhaustion in silence but those who recognise when they need guidance and take action.

The Role of Coaching

Coaching provides a supportive environment to reflect, set priorities, and implement meaningful change. Unlike therapy, which explores past trauma, coaching mainly focuses on the present and future, helping doctors optimise performance, overcome limiting beliefs, and sustain their careers without burning out.

For medical professionals, coaching offers:

- ▶ A confidential, non-judgmental environment to explore challenges and ambitions.
- ▶ Evidence-based strategies for stress management, leadership, and career progression.
- ▶ Discover strategies to improve work-life integration and decision-making.

Why Coaching Works for Doctors

Doctors rely on structure, logic, and evidence-based reasoning—coaching aligns with this mindset. It is not about vague motivation but about practical, science-backed strategies to enhance career satisfaction and personal wellbeing.



Dr Ira van der Steenstraten
Senior Executive Coach

Key Benefits of Coaching for Doctors

Burnout Prevention & Recovery

- ▶ Identify stressors, implement effective coping strategies, and prevent disengagement from medicine.

Work-Life Integration

- ▶ Prioritise what matters, establish boundaries, and reduce guilt around self-care.

Leadership Development

- Doctors often step into leadership roles with little formal training. Coaching can enhance essential skills in communication, team dynamics, and strategic decision-making.

Confidence & Imposter Syndrome

- Even accomplished doctors struggle with self-doubt. Coaching fosters self-awareness, helping doctors recognise achievements and build confidence.

Navigating Systemic Challenges

- ▶ Many doctors feel trapped in a system that undervalues their efforts. Coaching helps identify areas of control and find fulfilment within or beyond clinical practice.

Career Transitions

- ▶ Whether transitioning to leadership, academia, or private practice, coaching helps to clarify goals and overcome barriers.

Enhancing Patient Care

- ▶ Self-aware, emotionally intelligent doctors are better communicators, leading to improved patient outcomes.

The Science Behind Coaching

While research into medical coaching is still developing, initial findings show promising results. Studies indicate that doctors who engage in coaching report reduced burnout, improved stress management, greater job satisfaction, and enhanced leadership effectiveness. Coaching fosters resilience, leading to better decision-making and, ultimately, improved patient care.

Coaching in Action: Small Changes, Big Impact

Healthcare systems are complex and slow to change. However, coaching shifts the focus to what individual doctors can control—their mindset, career choices, and personal wellbeing.

Doctors on the verge of leaving medicine have discovered that small adjustments, such as setting clearer work boundaries and scheduling restorative time, significantly improves professional satisfaction. Others have used coaching to develop leadership skills, advocate for systemic improvements, or explore alternative career paths.

'Every Doctor, Every Setting': A New Era for Coaching

The 'Every Doctor, Every Setting' framework, a national initiative aimed at improving doctors' health and wellbeing, has now incorporated coaching as a formal support mechanism. This integration recognises coaching as a valuable tool in sustaining doctors' mental health, leadership development, and career longevity. Coaching is positioned alongside clinical

supervision, workplace wellbeing initiatives, and systemic reforms, ensuring doctors at all levels have structured access to professional guidance and career support.

Why Every Doctor Deserves a Coach

Seeking support is not a sign of failure but of self-awareness and strength. In professional sports, coaching is standard practice—why should it be any different in medicine?

Doctors invest years into their training and careers. Investing in coaching yields significant returns: enhanced mental health, career longevity, and renewed purpose. In some cases, coaching expenses may be covered by professional development funding or tax deductions.

For those feeling overwhelmed, exhausted, or stuck, coaching can provide a path forward—not as another obligation but as a way to work smarter, lead better, and live well.

Finding the Right Coach

Because coaching is unregulated, finding the right fit is essential. A coach with expertise in healthcare professionals' unique pressures, grounded in evidence-based methodologies, can offer the most meaningful support.

The Doctors Who Coach Doctors directory (doctorswhocoachdoctors.net) is a great resource for finding qualified medical professionals who understand the realities of clinical practice.

Every doctor deserves a coach. The real question is: Are you ready to invest in yourself the way you invest in your patients?

Letter to the Editor

Sophie Watson

Dear Editor,

I am writing as a junior doctor and a director of The VacSeen Project, who is both thrilled and proud to be part of the medical community supported by Brisbane Local Medical Association (BLMA). I was delighted to see the BLMA article featuring the important work our volunteers are doing, to offer primary healthcare to those experiencing homelessness, who are an often overlooked and vulnerable group. It is thanks to our team of compassionate doctors,

medical students and allied health workers that we can make a direct impact. We're grateful that the BLMA are helping us spread the word about our organisation. Many of our junior doctors are eager to join BLMA, and we are excited to meet others who share our passion for supporting marginalised and underserved communities. We warmly welcome any BLMA members who would like to get involved or learn more about our work. Feel free to reach out if you're interested in being included in our initiatives or collaborating with us in the future. Thank you once again for highlighting our work, and we look forward to being a part of the growing community within BLMA.



Sophie Watson
sophie@vacseen.org.au
 Intern at Queensland Health
 Director at the VacSeen Project



SHOCKWAVE THERAPY FOR PLANTAR FASCIITIS EVIDENCE-BASED BEST PRACTICE

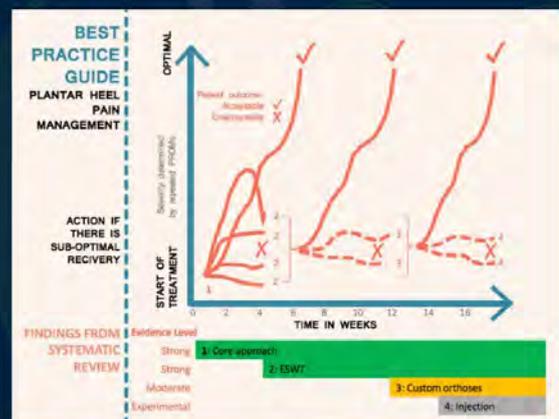
A systematic review by Morrissey et al. (2021), published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine, aimed to provide a 'Best Practice Guide' for managing plantar heel pain.

This guide combines findings from the systematic review with expert clinical reasoning and patient values to support practitioners in delivering effective, evidence-based care.

At Sports & Spinal, this guide has helped our **podiatrists** implement a structured, evidence-based treatment plan for patients with persistent plantar heel pain.

Our goal is to not only provide the most appropriate treatments but also to give our patients the best possible chance of recovery from this often-debilitating condition.

With the addition of EMS DolorClast shockwave machines at key locations, we're now able to offer the full range of recommended treatment options.



This is an image from the article that summarizes the recommended guide.

REFER TO SPORTS & SPINAL FOR SHOCKWAVE THERAPY

Podiatry referrals can be made via medical objects or through our website:
www.sportsandspinalphysio.com.au/contact/referrers/

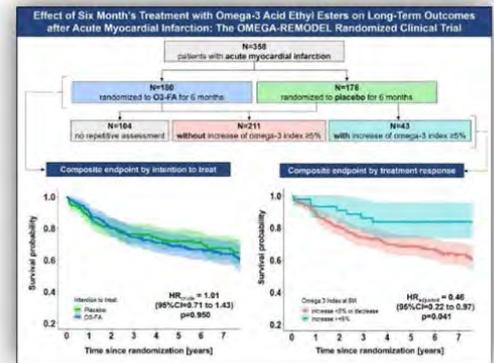
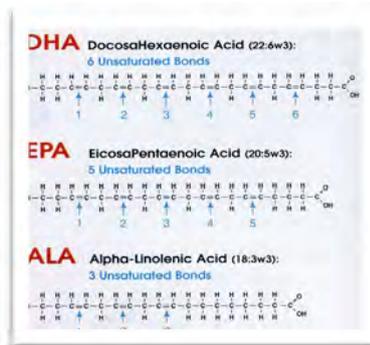
Omega-3 Facts and Fantasy—a Fishy Tale

A/Prof David Colquhoun

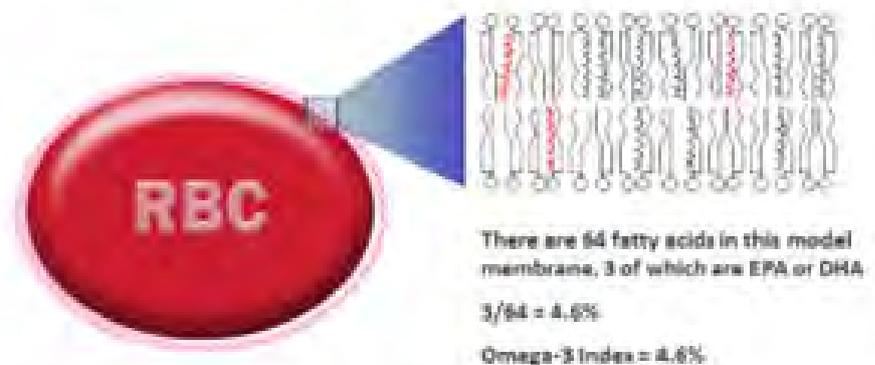
The long chain omega-3 marine fatty acids (EPA+DHA) are “essential” for life. The origin is almost entirely from algae and makes its way up the food chain. An amount comes from plant sources as Alpha linoleic acid which is elongated and desaturated. All ingested forms and sources are metabolized in the intestinal tract into free fatty acids and absorbed as micelles and transported in lipoproteins.

It was in 1956 that Hugh Sinclair thought deficiency of essential fatty acids, especially EPA+DHA, was a cause of atherosclerosis. Epidemiological studies have consistently demonstrated fish intake being associated with a reduced risk of coronary heart disease (CHD) and stroke (CVA). The first major clinical endpoint trial of supplemental marine n-3 in patients post-infarction was the GISSI-P Trial which was published in 1999. The trial involved 11,324 patients who were followed up for 3.5 years. Results showed a clear decrease in cardiovascular events, and in particular, sudden cardiac death.

The Omega-3 Index is an assessment of EPA and DHA as a proportion of fatty acids on a red cell membrane. This reflects adequate time levels and is available in Brisbane. Low levels



A measure of the amount of EPA+DHA in red blood cell membrane phospholipids expressed as the percent of total fatty acids



Harris WS and von Mackay C. *Prev Med* 2004;39:212-220.

are associated with elevated risk of sudden cardiac death, stroke, myocardial infarction, all cause mortality, severe mental illness and all cause dementia.

The failure of some supplemental fish oil trials is due to low doses and background omega-3 intake. The OMEGA-REMODEL trial demonstrated benefit post MI only if the omega-3 index increased by 5%.

All patients who have had or are at high risk of a vascular event should have their omega-3 index measured and, if low, increase fish intake or supplementation aiming for index >8% - steady state is achieved 3-6 months after supplementation.



A/Prof David Colquhoun
Clinical Cardiologist



Dr James Collins
BLMA Member

Metro North Health General Practice Liaison Officer

Here's a small selection of our GPLO articles in the weekly **Brisbane North PHN "GP Link" e-newsletter**. We encourage you to subscribe via the link above to receive the latest local health service news. There are multiple web links to resource, so please go to your medical association webpage where the electronic version of this newsletter can be found to click on the weblinks.

If you need to reach Metro North GP liaison team, please **[email us](#)**.

New Specialist Advice services available to support Metro North Health region GPs:

1. RBWH and Redcliffe Post Operative Discharge Support Service (PODSS)

Redcliffe and Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospitals have added a new service to support GPs and patients post hospital discharge. The Post Operative Discharge Support Service (PODSS) aims to prevent ED presentations and provide alternative care pathways for post surgical concerns such as fever, bleeding, wound concerns and pain within 30 days of discharge from a procedure. This is a Clinical Nurse Consultant led service that GPs can access via the Clinical Advice Line on 1800 569 099.

At this stage the following patients are covered:

Redcliffe Hospital PODSS:

Adult and paediatrics General Surgery, Orthopaedics, Urology, Gynaecology, ENT and Endoscopy patients

RBWH PODSS:

Adult Urology (not prostatectomy), Plastics, General Surgery (Hepatobiliary, Upper GI, Hernia, Thoracic, Colorectal) and Orthopaedics (elective lower limb only) patients

Eligible patients will also receive information on discharge as to how they can access the service directly.

This service is currently available Monday to Friday 8:30am – 4pm.

This is in addition to the range of specialties already providing advice to Metro North GPs which can be found at **[Clinical Advice Line](#)** on 1800 569 099, including **[Virtual Ward](#)** and **[Rapid Access to Community Care](#)**.

2. Neurology "Request for Advice" Service now available to support Brisbane North GPs

The Metro North Health Neurology stream has launched the latest "Request for Advice" (RFA) service to support GPs wanting access to timely neurology specialist advice

on diagnostic and/or treatment options for their patients.

This is not a referral, but is a request for timely clinical advice for GPs which may eliminate the need for a specialist face-to-face outpatient consultation.

The request for advice is sent via the **[GP Smart Referrals](#)** system (available to over 95% GP practices) and GPs will receive specialist response back via GP Smart Referrals from a Neurologist within 5 business days.

Please ensure you are clear what your clinical question is for the neurologist and include any relevant history, examination, imaging and pathology findings so that the neurologist can base their response based on the information you have provided. If minimal information is provided, it could make it difficult to provide a response.

How to send a: **"Request for Advice"**

This is service available to local GPs whose patients aged over 16 years live within the **[Metro North Health catchment area](#)**.

Please keep track of the Metro North **[Clinical Advice Phone Lines](#)** & **"Request for Advice" Services** to see any changes to services or new services as they become established.



If you need assistance using the GP Smart Referrals (GPSR), contact gpsr@brisbanenorthphn.org.au

Termination of Pregnancy

If you have a patient that requires termination of pregnancy in one of the Metro North Health hospitals, GPs can contact the **Termination of Pregnancy Service** via the **Metro North Clinical Advice Line** on **1800 569 099** Monday to Friday 0830-1600 to be guided as to how to refer your patients.

Supporting patients to safely taper and stop antidepressants

Many people experience withdrawal symptoms when they attempt to stop antidepressants. Withdrawal symptoms are frequently mistaken for relapse, by both patients and doctors, leading to reinstating or switching and continuing antidepressants.

The confusion is easy to understand since emotional symptoms, such as anxiety and irritability, are common to both withdrawal and relapse.

We now know that slow hyperbolic tapering of antidepressant dose can help to minimise antidepressant withdrawal symptoms. This approach is now recommended in clinical guidelines internationally. Researchers at the University of Queensland General Practice Clinical Unit have developed the RELEASE resources which include antidepressant-specific tapering plans providing practical

guidance for people to taper and stop antidepressants. There are tapering plans for 15 different antidepressants, including faster and slower tapering speeds, and a tool to determine which speed of tapering is most appropriate for each patient.

The RELEASE resources are freely available via the following link:

https://uniofqueensland.syd1.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_24BJLTBJT32xXmK

The RACGP has officially recognised both the RELEASE resources (developed by researchers at the University of Queensland) and the Maudsley Deprescribing Guidelines as Accepted Clinical Resources for stopping antidepressants via slow hyperbolic tapering of antidepressant dose to minimise withdrawal symptoms

For more information about the RELEASE study, see <https://medical-school.uq.edu.au/release>

Breast Cancer Education Event | Metro North Health

GPs interested in enhancing their knowledge of breast medicine are invited to a free education event delivered by the Comprehensive Breast Cancer Institute's expert multidisciplinary team who will discuss:

- ▶ breast cancer genetics, screening and Comprehensive Diagnostic Breast Clinic
- ▶ benign breast conditions

- ▶ contrast enhanced mammography
- ▶ lymphoedema management
- ▶ neoadjuvant chemotherapy.

Date: Saturday 14 June 2025

Time: 8.30 am – 12.00 pm

Venue: Clinical Skills Development Service, Block 6, Royal Brisbane Women's Hospital Campus

GPs can self-log take home CPD points for this event.

[Find out more and register.](#)

2025 RBWH Cancer Care Services Preceptorship for General Practitioners

Saturday 19 July 2025 | 8:30am – 3:30pm | Face to Face | Education Centre, RBWH

An engaging and interactive Haematology and Oncology case-based educational day crafted to promote collaboration among healthcare providers, strengthen support and enhance care for patients with haematological and oncological conditions.

To register, visit: **[RBWH-Cancer Care Services Preceptorship For General Practitioners](#)**

We look forward to seeing you at these upcoming events, please get in touch if you have any questions.



Brisbane South PHN staff and Francesca of Morningside Family Medical Centre with commemorative art created by local First Nations artist, Tallulah Mewett.

Morningside Family Medical Centre celebrates their QI success

Brisbane South PHN are proud to congratulate the team at Morningside Family Medical Centre for their achievements as part of the First Nations Continuous Quality Improvement (CQI) Program.

The First Nations CQI Program saw several general practices in our region undertake a Model for Improvement (Plan Do Study Act cycle) with a special emphasis on enhancing primary care services for Australia's First Nations people.

Michelle Johns, General Practice Quality Improvement Coordinator at Brisbane South PHN explains that Quality Improvement (QI) activities help general practice identify changes that will improve patient health outcomes and improve the delivery and access of care for patients.

She acknowledges that for general practices, the fast-paced and busy nature of their work can sometimes mean Quality Improvement (QI) activities aren't fully embraced and given the attention they need.

"Sometimes general practices see QI as an added burden," says Michelle, "but it's actually easier than they think, and incredibly valuable."

For Maria, the Practice Manager at Morningside Family Medical Centre, QI has always been about improving patient health outcomes.

"QI is a little more work at the start, but overall, once you start seeing improvements, it's rewarding knowing that we are providing better care," says Maria.

Helping close the gap

Morningside Family Medical Centre's involvement in the program underscores the growing commitment among healthcare professionals to address the disparities faced by First Nations people in accessing and receiving equitable health care.

"We ask ourselves, are we providing good patient care? Are we a space where patients feel safe? We want the health journey to be a shared experience where a patient has all the information they need to improve and optimise their health outcomes," says Maria.

For Francesca, a practice nurse at Morningside Family Medical Centre, participating in the CQI program has helped strengthen her knowledge of First Nations health, enabling her to have key details at the forefront of her mind when meeting with her First Nations patients.

“Due to the limited time available for each consultation, appointments can often feel rushed, and important issues and education, in particular preventative health care, can be overshadowed and forgotten,” says Francesca.

“I feel so much more thorough now, applying what I’ve learned through the project. It’s just strengthened what I can do to ensure that the needs of every patient are comprehensively addressed.”

Having up-to-date information about appropriate health checks, available immunisations, and common health issues more commonly affecting First Nations people helps health professionals provide the comprehensive care Francesca is so passionate about.



Image: Artwork created by local artist and proud Quandamooka woman, Tallulah Mewett, depicts themes of community, immunisation and closing the gap for First Nations people.

About the program

Key activities as part of the First Nations Continuous Quality Improvement Program included:

- ▶ establishing a Quality Improvement team to define skills, experience, knowledge, and viewpoints within the general practice team
- ▶ improving identification of the general practice’s First Nations and multicultural patients by ‘asking the question’
- ▶ identifying First Nations patients eligible for immunisations using the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) software
- ▶ cultural safety and awareness training to help further develop culturally safe practice.

For Francesca, the program not only gave her a fresh insight into First Nations health but consolidated what she has always done in her role as a practice nurse – her proactive approach to primary care extends beyond just addressing the immediate concerns of why a patient is visiting the practice on that day.

“It’s about looking at the bigger picture, which includes identifying preventative health care such as cervical screening, up to date blood tests and immunisations, to name a few. I now have a shortcut prompt to check immunisations, CST screenings, bowel screening - it’s all in my chart ready to go before I even see the patient on the day. CQI has helped make my nursing work drastically more thorough,” says Francesca.

QI for the entire practice

In line with its QI vision, Morningside Family Medical Centre now publishes a monthly bulletin for internal staff, detailing changes to billing, immunisation requirements, and quality improvement efforts,

to ensure all staff members are informed and involved in the QI process.

Practice manager Maria expressed her appreciation for how the entire team at Morningside has embraced QI to improve daily operations, further highlighting their commitment to providing high-quality care to their patients.

“Nurses are invaluable – they offer so much support to our team and are the pillars of our practice in coordinating patient care. Our reception staff are fantastic, managing patient recalls, taking down all these extra details. Our team has really embraced the CQI program,” says Maria.

The positive effects of the CQI program extended beyond just Morningside Family Medical Centre and their patients. Through the **Practice Nurse Support Program**, Francesca was able to share her experiences of the CQI program with other nurses in the region.

Michelle Gordon, Primary Care Development Coordinator at Brisbane South PHN who helps run the Practice Nurse Support Program said “Francesca shared everything she learned at the practice nurse meeting. It was a hit.”

More information for health professionals

Our Quality Improvement Team works with general practices in the Brisbane South PHN region to provide practical advice and resources to help plan, implement, and review your QI activities. To request further practice support, please contact the Quality Improvement team on **3864 7540** or email support@bsphn.org.au.

Find more QI resources and information on our website: bsphn.org.au/practice-support/quality-improvement



Dr Nick Yim
AMA Queensland President



Dr Brett Dale
AMA Queensland CEO



ama.com.au/qld

AMA Queensland

President and CEO update

May 2025

With the summer heat now behind us, we're preparing for the cold and the annual influx of respiratory illnesses that put pressure on our already stressed medical workforce.

We continue to support Queensland Health's push to boost the free flu shot program, which has been visible in our media efforts.

In the lead-up to this year's state budget on 24 June, the first from the LNP government, we are sharing our calls and priorities to ensure it puts the health of Queenslanders across the state first.

State budget

The economic blueprint will be handed down on 24 June, and AMA Queensland has made no bones about our priorities for the new government – workforce, workforce, workforce.

Dedicated to being part of the medical workforce solution, this year we established a Workforce Working Group to develop practical and professional recommendations to help guide government policy. These are due to be released this winter, so we'll have more to say in our next update.

Our budget campaign began with a spotlight on the increase in patients waiting to receive planned surgery. Our calls to implement the recommendations of our Surgical Waitlist Roundtable Action Plan received strong coverage in *The Sunday Mail*, *Cairns Post* and on several radio stations.

We've also highlighted mental health as a huge area of concern. We called on the government to boost services by an extra \$330 million, including delivering an additional 700 community mental health workers and 374 new psychiatric beds.

This was followed by our calls to support our health workforce to mitigate risks to patient safety, employee wellbeing and quality of care.

Most recently, we urged the government to prioritise meaningful investment in First Nations, women's and LGBTQIASB+ health services to close persistent gaps in care.

Our other budget priorities include, improving boosting digital integration, and ensuring more options and support for those needing end of life care.

[Read more](#)

GP training incentive

AMA Queensland welcomes any investment in healthcare, but particularly when it prioritises workforce support in the areas and specialties most in need.

This is why we were quick to welcome the Queensland Government's commitment to primary healthcare with the confirmation of the General Practice Trainee Incentive program.

The \$24 million investment will see more than 550 eligible doctors starting their GP training in Queensland in 2025 receive one-off payments of \$40,000 and is a much-needed attraction incentive to have doctors train to be GPs in Queensland.

We have long campaigned for this GP attraction incentive to align with that offered in Victoria, and it formed part of our 2025-26 and previous years' budget submissions.

We must support our junior doctors to work in our regional and rural areas, to care for those communities who are in desperate need of increased primary care access.

We look forward to seeing this, and other initiatives AMA Queensland has advocated for, funded in the upcoming state budget.

[Read our media release](#)

Real time hospital data

AMA Queensland welcomed the government's Open Hospitals portal as

a good first step in providing patients, health staff and the community with real-time information about our public health system.

However, the portal still has a long way to go if it is going to provide a clear picture to patients of the situation in our hospitals at any given moment.

Real time emergency data is crucial to driving effective reform and the effective allocation of resources, but it must reflect the reality of the patient experience, AMA Queensland President Dr Nick Yim told 4BC Radio.

The data portal must be accurate and transparent and provide patients and clinicians with the information they need to make their clinical decisions.

Until the data reflects the reality of the patient experience, we continue to urge the government to inform the public of the limited nature of the data and what the real wait times are to receive treatment.

[Read the 4BC transcript](#)

Vaccines

On Friday 30 May, Dr Yim joined Chief Health Officer Dr Heidi Carroll at Hawthorne Clinic in Brisbane to promote the importance of staying up to date with vaccinations, as flu rates spike and a new highly contagious strain of COVID-19 spreads in Australia.

Despite Queensland Health providing free influenza shots again this year, vaccination fatigue remains a real challenge.

Last year, nearly 200 people died from influenza – many of whom were unvaccinated. Concerningly, almost 20 per cent were aged between 30 and 65, a group generally considered to be at lowest risk.

We continue to promote the vaccine in the media and are supporting Queensland Health in circulating its resource kit for doctors containing key messages and materials you can use in your own communication channels.

[You can find it on our website.](#)

Healthscope collapse

The viability of the private health sector is becoming an increasing challenge, and this is only exacerbated by the news of Healthscope's collapse.

Healthscope has advised AMA Queensland that all its hospitals remain open and operational, with no current impacts on staff, doctors or patient care.

In an interview with 4BC Radio, Dr Yim said that although there will be uncertainty moving forward, we will continue to work with all stakeholders to ensure a smooth transition for staff, doctors and patients involved.

Beyond Healthscope, private health is an essential part of Australia's healthcare system.

This situation only reinforces the need to adopt the AMA's proposal for an independent Private Health System Authority, giving much better oversight of the sector.

Having robust private healthcare gives options to patients and reduces the burden on the public health system, while also providing extra opportunities for doctors and nurses who move between the two as a key driver of workforce retention.

We continue to urge the state and federal governments to work together to ensure a sustainable private healthcare system into the future.

[Read more about Healthscope collapse](#)

Board and Council election

Hervey Bay GP and incumbent President Dr Nick Yim has been re-elected by fellow doctors to serve a second term as AMA Queensland President.

He was officially reappointed to the role at the AMA Queensland AGM on Friday 30 May.

Vice President Dr Emilia Dauway will also serve a second term after being elected unopposed, along with Dr Eleanor Chew OAM as Board Chair.

One new Board member, Prof Paul Griffin, has been elected, as well as seven new Council members, including student representatives.

There were no eligible nominees for the Full-time Salaried Medical Practitioner Representative or Downs and West Area Representative positions. These positions will be advertised as casual vacancies.

[Read more](#)

AMA Queensland award winners

Four notable AMA Queensland members were honoured at this year's Dinner for the Profession on Friday 20 May.

Central Queensland GP Dr Mary Dunne, who has served the town of Woorabinda for nearly 30 years, was honoured with the Gold Medal.

The AMA Queensland Excellence in Healthcare Award went to breast cancer specialist Prof Sunil Lakhani, the Rural Health Medal to Dr Matt Masel and the Doctor in Training Medal to Dr Elise Witter.

We congratulate these doctors on their phenomenal achievements throughout their careers so far.

[Read more](#)

Upcoming events

Join us and the [Australian Senior Active Doctors Association](#) this August for our engaging and inspiring one-day [Senior Doctor Conference](#) tailored to senior active and retired doctors.

Are you thinking about travelling overseas this year? Join us for our [Annual Conference 2025](#) in Vancouver, Canada to earn CPD points and learn key issues facing the profession while immersed in a unique tourism destination.

We can't wait to see you at one of our 2025 events!

[Read more](#)

Discover a New Way to Travel with By Invitation

By Orbit World Travel

For those who believe travel should be personal, seamless, and extraordinary, By Invitation, Powered by Orbit World Travel, offers a world of tailored experiences. Designed for discerning travellers, By Invitation brings you carefully curated journeys, insider access, and exclusive benefits you will not find elsewhere.

It is more than just a holiday - it is an invitation to experience the world in ways few others can.

Curated journeys, crafted for you

Through exclusive partnerships with leading travel providers, By Invitation opens doors to remarkable experiences, with exceptional value and privileges available to its members. Here is just a glimpse of what is available right now:

▶ **Wildebeest Migration Safari - East Africa**

Experience a 14-day safari timed to the awe-inspiring Wildebeest Migration. Enjoy luxury accommodation and expert-led game drives, with options to extend your adventure to Rwanda for gorilla trekking or unwind on Zanzibar's pristine beaches.

▶ **Christmas on the Rhine - Uniworld Boutique River Cruises**

Celebrate the magic of a European Christmas with an eight-day river cruise from Cologne to Basel. Stroll through historic Christmas markets, sip mulled wine, and admire centuries-old cathedrals - with exclusive savings of up to \$2,400 per person and special solo traveller offers available.

▶ **Enchanting Canals & Nordic Delights - Explora Journeys**

Cruise from Southampton to Copenhagen aboard the luxurious EXPLORA III. Explore medieval Bruges, Amsterdam's canals, and Norway's breathtaking fjords. By Invitation members can enjoy up to \$2,500 per cabin in savings, plus up to USD\$700 onboard credit to enhance their journey.

▶ **Alaska's Majestic Beauty - Regent Seven Seas Cruises**

Discover the rugged splendour of Alaska with an all-inclusive luxury cruise from Seward to Vancouver. Journey past towering glaciers and scenic fjords while enjoying bonus onboard spending of up to USD\$1,200 per cabin, based on double occupancy.

▶ **Voyages of a Lifetime - Golden Eagle Luxury Train**

Step aboard a private luxury train and rediscover the art of slow travel through Europe, the Silk Road, or India. Indulge in gourmet dining, elegant cabins, and cinematic landscapes - with an exclusive bonus of two complimentary five-star hotel nights pre or post-tour, valued at \$1,000.

▶ **Taste the World - Oceania Cruises**

Sail to destinations you have always dreamed of, with up to 30% off select Oceania sailings. Plus, enjoy a free beverage package and up to USD\$800 shipboard credit - perfect for sampling Oceania's renowned fine dining and immersive shore experiences.

▶ **Coming Soon - Egypt 2026**

Get ready for an unforgettable adventure through Egypt's timeless wonders. This exclusive tour includes a luxury cruise along the Nile and special access to the Grand Egyptian Museum, the largest archaeological museum in the world. Register your interest now to secure early access.

Personalised travel, exceptional service

At the heart of By Invitation is a commitment to delivering journeys that feel truly personal. Your dedicated Luxury Travel Advisor works closely with you to understand your preferences, interests, and dreams - creating itineraries that are tailored to you. Whether you are seeking a cultural immersion, a once-in-a-lifetime celebration, or simply time to unwind in beautiful surroundings, every detail is thoughtfully considered to ensure a seamless and extraordinary experience. And while these journeys offer just a glimpse, the possibilities are endless. From Arctic expeditions to private island escapes, By Invitation can turn your travel aspirations into reality.

Start your next great journey

If you are ready to explore the world on your own terms, Ros and Karen from Orbit World Travel are ready to help. With By Invitation, you are not just booking a trip - you are stepping into a world of extraordinary experiences, tailored just for you.



Ros Chillingworth
1300 262 885

ros.chillingworth@orbitworldtravel.com.au



Karen Hartley
1300 262 885

karen.hartley@orbitworldtravel.com.au



Queensland Doctors Identifying Health Needs

Have your say about the causes that matter to you.



AMA Queensland Foundation was established by AMA Queensland members in 2000 in response to growing patient needs, shortfalls in health funding, and to help medical students facing financial hardship. To celebrate the Foundation's 25th year, we are once again asking doctors across Queensland to share their feedback on health issues, charities or community causes that you believe need financial support.

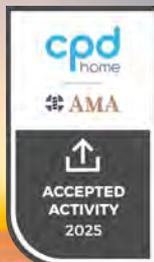
This short, anonymous survey offers some suggestions for consideration only and also seeks individual input. We encourage all Queensland doctors to share their feedback on areas of need that the AMA Queensland Foundation can help support.

amaqfoundation.com.au/page/Grants/Survey_Identifying_Health_Needs/

EOFY Tax Appeal Support our Medical Student Scholarships



Donate today



SENIOR DOCTOR CONFERENCE

SATURDAY, 9 AUGUST 2025
VOCO HOTEL, BRISBANE





Event Wrap up

Since our last edition of Synapse, we have held two educational events, one for all members and one specifically for our Doctors in Training members.

On Monday 31 March 2025, our general members event was at the Sofitel Brisbane Central and was a wonderful example of how well a collaborative sponsorship can work to facilitate a BLMA event. Out thanks go to sponsors Pfizer, and long-term partners Mater and q4 Financial worked wonderfully together on this occasion. We also welcomed our new partners Avant Mutual who had several representatives at the event. There was a lot of interest from members in the topics, which included an 'Update on RSV and Prevention' from Professor Paul Griffin, 'Common paediatric surgical conditions and an extra mini session on AI in practice' from Dr Bhavesh Patel, and a very robust Q&A session with Kelly and Rod from q4 financial.

Our Doctors in Training event focussing on "Interview Tips and Tricks" was held on Wednesday 7 May 2025 at The Rosalie Russell Conference and Education Centre

at St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital. It is the first time we have held a BLMA event at that venue and we were impressed with the facilities for such an event. Our DiT members received 3 excellent presentations on 'Interview coaching' from Dr Anthony Llewellyn (Psychiatrist / The Career Doctor), 'The interviewer perspective' from Dr Janet Draper (BLMA committee member / RANZCOG interview panellist) and 'How to mentally prepare for the pressure of interviews' from Dr Ira van der Steenstraten (Psychiatrist & Life Coach / Vitae Wellbeing & Leadership). Avant Mutual, our main sponsor for the event, had Ben Brehaut and Kimberley Chee complete proceedings with a presentation about many of the extra benefits Avant provide in addition to excellent medico-legal services. Dr Bruce Wang, one of our DiT committee members, deserves the accolades for organising this event and for being our MC for the evening.

Please see our social media pages for more photographs and reels from the events. Our next event is for all members and will be held at the Queensland Cricketer's Club on Thursday 12 June 2025. Members should have received an email with a link to obtain their Eventbrite tickets, with details also available on our Facebook page.



Advertising Kit 2025

The Brisbane Local Medical Association's Newsletter Synapse is a bi-monthly publication.

DISTRIBUTION

- ▶ Circulated to specialists, GPs, Private and Public Hospitals, allied health workers, practice managers, retired doctors, Public or Private Sector Doctor, Doctors in Training and GP Registrars throughout the Greater Brisbane Region.
- ▶ All newsletters are uploaded to the BLMA website which attracts strong traffic – brisbanelma.org

NEWSLETTER

- ▶ Electronic and printed copies are distributed.
- ▶ Each edition is between 20 and 28 pages.
- ▶ All content is to be approved by the editor.
- ▶ Advertising guidelines apply.
- ▶ Please see Newsletter for frequency for content due deadlines and distribution dates.

If you are interested in advertising in SYNAPSE please contact:

Renee O'Brien
Phone 07 3872 2248
Email info@brisbanelma.org

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Dr Dilip Dhupelia
Email info@brisbanelma.org

NEWSLETTER FREQUENCY 2025

Month	Content Due	Distribution
July	Friday 4 July	Late July
September	Monday 1 September	Late September
November	Monday 3 November	Late November

DISCLAIMER

While Brisbane Local Medical Association will do all possible to ensure advertising material is reproduced as intended, the responsibility is firmly with the client/ advertiser to supply advertising material according to our specifications.

ADVERTISING RATES

Full Page Ad

- \$550 or 3 ads for \$1400
- ▶ 186mm (w) x 246mm (h)
- ▶ No bleeds or crop marks
- ▶ PDF format

Half Page Ad

- \$425 or 3 ads for \$1100
- ▶ 186mm (w) x 120mm (h)
- ▶ No bleeds or crop marks
- ▶ PDF format

Quarter Page Ad

- \$275 or 3 ads for \$675
- ▶ 186mm (w) x 57mm (h)
- ▶ No bleeds or crop marks
- ▶ PDF format

Business Card Size Ad

- \$100
- ▶ 90mm (w) x 57mm (h)
- ▶ No bleeds or crop marks
- ▶ PDF format

Advertorials

- \$475 or 3 ads for \$1200
- Please note the following discounts:*
- ▶ 10% discount for 3 or more placements.
- ▶ 20% discount for 6 placements (1 year).

CLASSIFIEDS

All classifieds are subject to the Editor's discretion.

- ▶ No charge to current BLMA members.
- ▶ Non-members: \$100.
- ▶ Word count no more than 120 words.

ARTWORK SPECIFICATIONS

- ▶ All artwork must be supplied as a CMYK high-res/print ready PDF.
- ▶ All artwork is to exclude bleed, crop marks, registration bars, spot or PMS colours and registration colours.
- ▶ All fonts must be embedded in the PDF or converted to outlines.
- ▶ No type should be smaller than 6 points.
- ▶ If specifications are not met artwork needs to be resubmitted by the due date.

ADVERTORIALS SPECIFICATIONS

- ▶ Copy to be supplied in a Word Doc.
- ▶ Image should be high-res and the file size should be at least 1MB.

