

Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local

The Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local, one of the first Medicare Locals to be established under the Australian Government's reform of primary healthcare in 2011, supports communities within Brisbane's northern suburbs, the Moreton Bay Regional Council and part of the Somerset Regional Council.

The Government's vision for Medicare Locals is to establish a national network of organisations whose focus is on enabling local communities to access the health care they need, when they need it and to fill the gaps in health care services for those communities.

The Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local was established by one of the country's leading divisions of general practice, GPpartners Ltd, the division of general practice located on Brisbane's north side.

On 1 July 2011, GPpartners Ltd transferred its programs, services and staff to the Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local, providing our communities with the first fully functional Medicare Local in Australia.

The Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local will build upon the strong partnerships formed across the region by the division over the past 18 years to work closely with general practice, hospitals, community-based services and other primary healthcare providers with the aim of improving health service delivery and achieving better health outcomes for the communities served by the Medicare Local.



What will the Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local do?

National aims

The Australian Government has tasked Medicare Locals with:

- making it easier for people to access the services they need, by linking local GPs, nursing and other health professionals, hospitals and aged care, and maintaining local service directories
- working closely with Local Hospital Networks to make sure that primary health care services and hospitals work well together for their patients
- planning and supporting local after-hours face-to-face GP services

- identifying where local communities are missing out on services they might need and coordinating services to address those gaps
- supporting local primary care providers to adopt and meet quality standards.

For more information about the Medicare Local concept, see the Your Health website <http://www.yourhealth.gov.au> What's happening locally?

In the first six months of operation, the Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local will work to ensure continuity of service delivery for those primary care providers who have been involved with their division of general practice.

The Medicare Local will work closely with the planned Metro North Local Health and Hospital Network and begin to build stronger links with allied health and community-based organisations.

Engagement structures such as advisory and planning committees will be established over time and will provide opportunities for healthcare professionals and provider organisations to have input into local health service planning and delivery.

A key planning structure will be the "Partnership Planning Council", made up of a wide range of organisations involved in primary health care in the region.

The Council will have a key role in identifying service gaps in the community and developing plans to fill those gaps.

The Council's role will be supported by a number of Community Consultative Committees as well as a Lead Clinicians' Group, providing an opportunity for health consumers and clinicians to have a strong voice in the Medicare Local's planning functions.

Early priorities for the Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local include:

- health service planning for all communities in the region
- building capacity to help people seeking mental health services and managing the region's Access to Allied Psychological Services programs
- implementing e-health reforms including the Personally Controlled Electronic Health Record
- assessing the region's after hours GP services and developing a plan to improve access where needed.

Get connected

Partners program

An early challenge will be finding out exactly what healthcare services are available across the region, including hospital and public health services, community-based health and social services, general practitioners, allied health professionals and aged care providers.

One of the ways we are doing this is via our Partners Program.

In response to numerous enquiries about connecting with the Medicare Local, we have set up the Partners Program to keep health professionals and other interested parties informed about the Medicare Local as it develops.

By registering with the Partners Program, you will be placed on our mailing list to receive communications and your professional details will be stored in our database.

To register, simply phone us for a Partners Program registration form or download one from www.mnbml.com.au. There is no fee.

Healthcare providers and individual health professionals do not have to pay any kind of membership or subscription fee in order to access the services and support that will be offered by the Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local. **In the community**

We will be setting up ways members of the community can connect with their Medicare Local including attending community events and expos as well as a community portal on our new website, which will host service finders, health information and will link with social media such as facebook and Twitter.

Membership

There is no requirement for any healthcare provider or individual to become a member of, or pay any subscription fee, to access Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local services.

'Membership' in the context of the Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local is part of the company's governance structure and is limited to organisations only.

Organisations with a recognised role in primary health care leadership are eligible to apply for membership of Partners 4 Health Ltd, the company trading as the Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local.

The primary role and 'benefit' of becoming a Member is to elect the Board of Directors, which is responsible for the governance of the Medicare Local.

Profile

The Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local will support the communities within Brisbane's northern suburbs, the Moreton Bay Regional Council and a small part of the Somerset Regional Council, covering around 4,000 km².

The region, which has a population of just over 850,000, contains predominantly urban communities but also regional and rural areas in the far northern and western areas reaches of the catchment.

The Metro North Brisbane Medicare Local aligns with the planned Metro North Local Hospital and Health Network and is part of the state-wide Children's Health Services.

The Medicare Local will operate from two sites – Lutwyche, in Brisbane's inner north, and North Lakes.

Population		Health services	
Estimated population	*853,377	General practices	272
Aged 65 years and over	101,313	Public hospitals	6
Indigenous Australians	11,134	Community health centres	11
Born NES countries	62,502	Residential aged care facilities	95
Estimated unemployed	11,406	Private hospitals	11
Pensioner/concession card holders	110,575	Day hospital facilities	17

- *Estimated residential population as at June 2009. Provided by the Department of Health and Ageing.
- Australian General Practice Network. (2011) National Transition Project: Medicare Locals Population Health Profiles, Baseline data, January 2011
- Queensland Health, 2011. Queensland Health Service District Profiles, viewed 8 March 2011, www.health.qld.gov.au/www/profiles/default.asp
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- Aged Care Connect, n.d. List of aged care facilities in Queensland, viewed 14 March 2011, www.agedcareconnect.com.au/residential_aged_care_homes_brisbane.php