

## Three initiatives promoting safety and quality in rural and remote practice

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The **Rural and Remote Clinical Support Unit** (RRCSU) is administered by the Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service and is based in Cairns. The unit takes great pride in the work undertaken to support the full range of health services provided across rural and remote areas of Queensland. The unit understands that many health services in rural and remote areas are the single health service provider to their local community and are most often required to provide the full range of primary health care.

The unit has invested in developing three integrated initiatives to address the full spectrum of patient presentations that may be encountered by rural and remote practitioners:

- the **Primary Clinical Care Manual** provides practitioners with evidence based clinical care guidelines dealing with acute presentations
- the **Chronic Conditions Manual** supports health staff to respond to chronic conditions over time
- the **Pathways Accessing Rural and Remote Orientation and Training** (PARROT) Program provides support and extra information not only on the best use of these manuals, but also relating to working in the rural and remote environment.

The RRCSU poster showcases not only the structure, content and function of these initiatives, but also the links between them and how they can improve quality and safety for rural and remote health services.

The **Primary Clinical Care Manual** (the PCCM) is the principal clinical reference and policy document for health professionals in rural and remote Queensland. The PCCM provides guidelines on assessment, immediate treatments, follow up and referral of patients. It is supported by legislation and specific education, training and support for staff. It provides evidence based clinical care guidelines particularly for those working in isolation from immediate medical support. The PCCM also provides the authority for appropriately trained and endorsed rural and remote health professionals to engage in advanced practice under the *Queensland Health (Drugs & Poisons) Regulation 1996* by administering and supplying medications which would otherwise require a doctor's or Nurse Practitioner's order.

The **Chronic Conditions Manual** (CCM) is the statewide clinical practice manual for the prevention, early detection and management of common modifiable lifestyle related chronic conditions. The CCM provides a simple, easy to read standardised tool to inform clinical practice. It consolidates national and international evidence based guidelines as well as nationally recommended age related early detection health checks for children and adults. The manual also includes current national recommendations for modifiable lifestyle behaviours and is endorsed by leading local, statewide and national clinical networks, and leading clinicians and specialists in their fields.

The **Pathways Accessing Rural and Remote Orientation and Training** (PARROT) program has been developed for the multi-cultural, multidisciplinary health team. It supports education, orientation and training of all health care workers in rural, remote and primary health care settings. Aspects of the program can be applied and accessed from pre-recruitment to the provision of ongoing care in chronic disease prevention, detection and management in a comprehensive primary health care framework. PARROT is available as an internet based, free online training program with access to supporting resources including workbooks, links to resources and other education programs.

Further information can be obtained by contacting the Rural and Remote Clinical Support Unit at [RRCSUCairns@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:RRCSUCairns@health.qld.gov.au)

## Presenter

**Peter McCormack** has been involved in rural and remote nursing as a clinician and nursing manager since 1987, having worked across both Cape York and Torres Strait. He was in the first cohort to complete the Rural and Isolated Practice Registered Nurse (RIPRN) course in 1999 and maintains his Scheduled Medicines endorsement through regular periods of practice. For the last 6 years, Peter has been involved in quality, safety, clinical governance and clinical support for rural and remote areas across Queensland. Peter is currently the Director of the Rural and Remote Clinical Support Unit which produces the Primary Clinical Care Manual, the Chronic Conditions Manual and the Pathways to Rural and Remote Orientation and Training.