

Report for 31st Queensland Synod October 2014



Report from **UnitingCare Queensland**



Context:

UnitingCare Queensland is committed to Uniting in Christ, acting with love, living with hope, witnessing in faith and working for justice. As part of the Uniting Church in the Queensland Synod, the mission of UnitingCare Queensland is to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals, families and communities as we reach out to people in need; speak out for fairness and justice; and care with compassion, innovation and wisdom.

Blue Care, UnitingCare Community, UnitingCare Health and ARRCS (Australian Regional Remote Community Services) are vital expressions of this mission.

On any given day, through our service groups, one of our 64 chaplains, 15 000 staff or 9 000 volunteers could bring a new baby into the world; support a patient receiving cancer treatment in hospital; help settle a newcomer into residential aged care or a young person into out-of-home care; support a person with a disability to live independently; or respond to a person experiencing a crisis. As the health and community service provider of the Uniting Church we have supported Queensland communities for over 100 years.

Our staff travel millions of kilometres to reach people in some of the more remote areas of Queensland – from Thursday Island in the far north, to just south of the Queensland border and out west to Mount Isa and Charleville – and now into the Northern Territory.

UnitingCare Queensland works in an environment where there are major reforms in most of the sectors we operate in; health, aged and community care, disability, child protection and community services. The major drivers of change in the health and community services sector over the next ten years include increasing customer expectation, specifically in relation to person-centred care and consumer directed care; increasing market contestability; reforms to government funding and contracting, and an increasing emphasis on cost efficiency.

At the same time, demand for services is increasing; more providers, both private and non-profit, are entering the 'market' place and new technology is changing the way consumers interact with traditional services.

These changes are significant not only for people who will have more choice about what and how they receive a particular service, but also for more marginalised people who may have very limited or no choice. In a contestable market, demonstrating improved outcomes and quality of life for our clients will be an imperative. These reforms are critical to our mission of improving the wellbeing of all those we serve and we support them strongly, albeit we will need to continue advocacy for those disadvantaged people who may not benefit from the reforms.

Our new strategic plan (2014-2017) highlights three clear goals which will focus our efforts over the next three years to drive the changes needed to respond to the changing environment. Our strategic goals are to be the choice for care and service; to be financially sustainable and secure, and to have dynamic people in a dynamic organisation. Strategic priorities support these goals together with an outline of what success will look like.

Responding to the sector wide reforms has been significant, as has responding to a call to serve people in some of the most remote parts of Australia. Building on the work that Blue Care undertook to ensure the indigenous aged care and drug and alcohol services previously run by CCDEU continued, and as part of our mission to reach out to people in need and to provide support and services in areas other providers may not go to, UnitingCare Queensland has created a fourth service group – ARRCS (Australian Regional and Remote Community Services) to manage aged care and related services previously run by Frontier Services in the Northern Territory. This is the result of many months of working with Frontier Services, the Federal Government, local communities and staff of the services. ARRCS provides aged care and community services in the Northern Territory, predominantly for Indigenous people. The services are located in Darwin, Alice Springs, Tennant Creek, Katherine, Mutitjulu and Docker River.

The UnitingCare Queensland Board and the Queensland Synod has made the commitment to work in these communities for the long term, to bring quality care and other services to people who need support and to improve the lives and wellbeing of older Australians. This has been supported by the Church nationally, by the Northern Synod and by the UnitingCare Aged Care network, some of whom have provided practical and financial support to enable UnitingCare Queensland to do this work.

Another highlight since the last Synod for UnitingCare Queensland has been the focus on preparing for the opening of the new St Stephen's integrated digital hospital in Hervey Bay. This is the first fully integrated digital hospital in Australia, consolidating clinical specialities not previously available on the Fraser Coast, in a non-profit, private setting. St Stephen's Hervey Bay Hospital will move from a day hospital to a fully integrated state-of-the-art, 96 bed digital facility, enabling patient data to be uploaded automatically to a patient's electronic medical record. The technology will enable more timely decision making as well as improved accuracy, efficiency, quality and patient safety. The hospital is on track to receive its first patient on 13 October 2014.

Additionally as a continuation of our mission-based health service, a joint venture has been established between Mater Health Services and UnitingCare Queensland, entitled Trinity Health. The partnership was established in September 2013, specifically for the purpose of tendering for the provision of medical and health services at the current Royal Children's Hospital (RCH) site in Herston, Brisbane. This site will be largely vacated in late 2014 after the transfer of paediatric services to the new Lady Cilento Children's Hospital in South Brisbane.

The Queensland Government, through Projects Queensland, has commenced a process to inform the proposed development of the RCH site and has called for registrations of interest for future development proposals. The Trinity Health Board has been considering the development options for the site that will service the catchment of Metro North Hospital and Health Service residents. The UnitingCare Queensland Board has appointed Heather Watson (previous Board Chair), Chris Townend (existing UnitingCare Queensland Board Member) and Richard Royle (UnitingCare Health Executive Director, ex-officio) as members of the Trinity Health Board.

The UnitingCare Queensland Board has also responded to the challenging environment we operate in by staying focussed on its own renewal and development. The Board and Committees have recently gone through a renewal with the retirement of Heather Watson as Chair and Ray Richards in March 2014, both of whom had been members of the Board since UnitingCare's governance reform in 2005. Craig Barke has been appointed as the new Chair; Craig had been a member of the Board and the Audit, Risk and Compliance Board Committee for the previous three years. Craig is a member of the Logan Congregation of the Uniting Church and previously served on the Logan Church Council and Calvary Christian College School Council.

The Board is well positioned to provide the leadership and direction required for the organisation to serve people including some of the most vulnerable and marginalised people in society, within the context of staying sustainable in a dynamic, fiscally constrained and ever changing operating environment.

Responses to our Priority Directions since last Synod

Enabling a demonstrated commitment to the shared Call and Vision

Strategic Plan

The development of the new UnitingCare Queensland strategic plan was a great opportunity for the Board and staff to give its full attention to what UnitingCare Queensland is called to do now and into the future.

The key challenges presented by government reforms include contestability of government contracts at both the state and federal levels, *Living Longer, Living Better* (aged care reform), the implication of the Carmody Inquiry in Queensland (Child Protection), the commitment to the introduction of the National

Disability Insurance Scheme, together with UnitingCare Queensland's commitment to assume responsibility for the former CCDEU services in Townsville, Cairns, Cooktown and the Torres Strait and 'Frontier Services' in the Northern Territory. Looking at a ten year horizon, UnitingCare Queensland has done its best to discern what the requirements are now so that the Queensland Synod is still relevant in its health and community services in 2024.

Reconciliation

UnitingCare Queensland's commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People has been a key focus since the last Synod in Session.

During Reconciliation Week, 27 May – 3 June 2014, UnitingCare Queensland launched its second Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP II) after achieving all the actions set out in the first plan. The launch was held in a moving ceremony at *kuril dhagun* at The State Library of Queensland in Brisbane. The support for the campaign to recognise Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the Australian Constitution was a key theme of the launch.

A very practical expression of our commitment to reconciliation has been UnitingCare's commitment to ensuring the continuation and stabilisation of the ex CCDEU aged care and drug and alcohol services in NQ/FNQ and the Torres Strait (now known as Blue Care Indigenous Services) and the recent creation of ARCS in the Northern Territory. Prison Ministry is also responding through its responsibilities for First People's Chaplaincy.

UnitingCare Queensland also stays focussed on supporting increased employment opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. Currently more than 2.3 per cent of UnitingCare Queensland staff who recently responded to staff surveys have identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people which is just below the proportion - 2.5 per cent - of Indigenous people in the Australian population. We are very pleased that about 90 per cent of the staff in Blue Care's Indigenous services and about 30 per cent of our staff in Out of Home Care services for children are Indigenous.

Embedding a focus on call and mission

Across UnitingCare Queensland there is systematic focus on UnitingCare's mission as part of the Church in induction and orientation programs and in our leadership development programs. Both the Board and executive staff reference and talk about UnitingCare Queensland as an expression of the mission of the Church in many public and staff forums.

Beyond UnitingCare Queensland: Building a shared commitment to vision and mission

UnitingCare Australia

UnitingCare Queensland also continues to be active in the policy and advocacy work of UnitingCare Australia and is active in the National Committee, the National Aged Care Network and the Children Young People and Families National Committee, and the National Ministry and Mission Network. Wherever possible, UnitingCare Australia works with the other major Church community service providers. UnitingCare Australia provided a submission to inform the Federal Commission of Audit's deliberations, and UnitingCare Queensland contributed to this. Reviews and activities such as the disbanding of the Australian Social Inclusion Board, the probable dismantling of the Australian Charities and Not-for-Profits Commission and the national review of mental health provided further national engagement opportunities on relevant policy issues.

Engagement with government

UnitingCare Queensland has maintained relationships with key political stakeholders within government and opposition across the year. In November 2013, after the Federal election, the CEO of UnitingCare Queensland wrote to Queensland Members of the House of Representatives and Senators, to formally

introduce the issues of concern to UnitingCare Queensland and have had subsequent contact with a number of those politicians.

The areas of interest for UnitingCare Queensland included: the need for engagement with providers about aged care reforms; the need for less administration and regulation for community service organisations; support for the full implementation and funding of the National Disability Insurance Scheme in Queensland; the need for strong leadership from the Federal Government in Indigenous policy; the importance of the private health insurance rebate in maintaining a strong private health system; and the opportunities offered by the roll out of the National Broadband Network particularly for Telehealth.

UnitingCare Queensland has also written to all Queensland Members of Parliament and Senators regarding our concerns with the 2014 Federal Budget.

Deloitte Access Economics Report

An Economic and Social Value of UnitingCare Queensland report was commissioned from Deloitte Access Economics to more fully understand the contribution our services make to the Australian economy.

The findings from the report confirm UnitingCare Queensland as a significant contributor, not only providing a social benefit by improving the quality of people's lives, but also by adding \$1.3 billion of value to the Australian economy.

Working towards our Priority Directions in the future

- A) Having just completed our new Strategic Plan 2014-2017, the key focus will be the implementation of the action plans associated with the three goals and the eight strategic priorities associated with these goals.

The strategic priorities include:

- Continued improvement in the delivery of person centred care and service
- Delivery of better value, client focussed services
- Strengthening community connections and contributions including a focus on justice in social policy, our presence in regional growth areas, sustainable models in rural and remote areas including the Northern territory, and engagement with local networks and Church congregations
- Improved financial performance and sustainability
- Having a capable and engaged workforce
- Continued investment in leadership development
- Continued focus on our values and culture, including strengthening an outcome focussed performance culture
- Technology that effectively supports and improves services

Twenty-nine major initiatives have been identified across UnitingCare Queensland.

- B) Implementation of our Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP II)
- C) The Church's response to the Royal Commission will continue to be a major focus for UnitingCare Queensland as the Church collectively seeks to discern it's response to those people who have been victims of child sexual abuse while in our care.

Responses to our Priority Directions since last Synod

Promoting a discipline of prayer and spirituality (individual and corporate)

Pastoral and spiritual care services

UnitingCare Queensland continues to be committed to providing pastoral and spiritual care services across our service groups. With 64 chaplains and 300 pastoral care volunteers, in addition to Prison Ministry, this is a vital ministry in the life of the Church.

In **UnitingCare Health** 12 chaplains and approximately 50 volunteers provide pastoral care every day to patients, their families and staff in our hospitals. Initiatives of the Pastoral Care Departments have included the Praying Hands program, involvement in staff wellbeing programs, the blessing of theatres and other units and leading staff Bible studies.

The Praying Hands initiative was the brainchild of The Wesley Hospital pastoral care department. The program came out of the twin desires to enable staff to offer prayer if it was requested and to empower staff to express their God given gifts in prayer. We also wanted to demonstrate that prayer was a work of the people not just the chaplains. The aim was to train staff who could respond to a patient request for prayer.

Within **Blue Care**, pastoral and spiritual care services are provided by 50 chaplains and 250 pastoral care volunteers. Since the last Synod, an extensive chaplaincy review was undertaken so that all services have access to a Chaplain. Networks in communities have been encouraged, and there has been a strong focus on palliative care, grief and bereavement. A mission planning framework has been developed as these services have continued to support the organisation as it goes through unprecedented change. Chaplains have also been commissioned into Blue Care Indigenous Services. In an effort to provide these services into changing local contexts, chaplaincy has been provided in Mackay, Azure Blue Redcliffe and Carina, and patrol chaplaincy services have been initiated in south west Queensland and Townsville.

In **UnitingCare Community**, two state-wide chaplains and pastoral care volunteers have worked predominantly with staff providing site visits, staff pastoral care sessions, workshops (developed by the chaplains in the areas of UnitingCare Queensland values, self care, team building and spirituality), leadership coaching, rituals or reflections and some client pastoral sessions. Easter and Christmas worship services have been initiated, as well as cards being sent to staff in every UnitingCare Community site. Chaplains have also liaised with Brisbane presbyteries to collate a referral list of Brisbane community/Church emergency relief services.

UnitingCare Community Prison Ministry provides chaplaincy, chaplain's assistants and resource workers, dedicated to providing care and support for the ever-increasing population of people in Queensland's prisons. The rates of mental illness, substance abuse and illiteracy in our prisons remain extraordinarily high.

UnitingCare Community chaplains support inmates and their families, both emotionally and practically, to have the best chance of rehabilitation. Last year Prison Ministry provided some new programs including music appreciation for children living in prison, cooking lessons, literacy and numeracy development as well as a program delivered through a partnership with Wesley Mission Brisbane where inmates prepare meals for people living without a home.

In the year 2013/2014 UnitingCare Community chaplains made 1 208 visits to various correctional centres; spent 4 848 hours in the centres working directly with offenders and their families; delivered 888 hours of Church services and provided 3 384 hours of support outside the correctional centres.

PASCOP (Pastoral and Spiritual Care of Older People)

In a joint initiative UnitingCare Queensland, the Synod and Wesley Mission Brisbane, are foundational sponsors for PASCOP (Pastoral and Spiritual Care of Older People), a national organisation promoting and pursuing excellence in the provision of pastoral and spiritual care for the benefit of older people, their significant others and their carers. PASCOP has been successfully launched in 2014, providing benefits to members including resources and seminars. It is also leading a joint project to develop national guidelines for pastoral and spiritual care in aged care; and developing training opportunities. UnitingCare Queensland Director of Mission, Colleen Geyer is a member of the PASCOP Board.

Director of Mission – UnitingCare Community

Adding to the Mission leadership across UnitingCare Queensland, UnitingCare Community has created a Director of Mission role. The role will be a member of the UnitingCare Community executive; its focus will be on enhancing the focus on values and organisational culture, chaplaincy and pastoral care and on strengthening the connections between UnitingCare Community and the wider Church including congregations.

Worship in UnitingCare Queensland

Opportunities for worship were provided to clients, patients and staff throughout the year – within services by chaplains, local congregational ministry agents and members; for staff in corporate offices at significant times within the Christian calendar and in recognition of significant events.

Reflection and prayer

Reflections and prayer begin meetings of the Board and UnitingCare Queensland Executive Leadership team in order to focus thinking on our identity as part of the mission of the Uniting Church and the important work that we do. This is also the case in other team meetings across UnitingCare Queensland. A faith focus was also written into reflections on leadership that were developed as part of a toolkit that focuses on the UnitingCare Queensland Leadership Framework.

Working towards our Priority Directions in the future

UnitingCare Queensland will continue to engage in prayer and in activities that promote spirituality and reflection as an important expression of who we are as part of the mission of the Uniting Church, and as we continue to participate in the Queensland Synod's Together on the Way Enriching Community call and priority directions.

Responses to our Priority Directions since last Synod

Developing sustainable mission orientated organisation (way of being) for the Church in Queensland

Strategic Plan

Development of the new UnitingCare Queensland Strategic Plan 2014/2017 has been completed with involvement from the Board and Executive Leadership Team, individual consultation meetings with key stakeholders, scenario planning sessions, a workshop with senior staff and broader staff engagement across the organisation.

The new plan continues our commitment to provide person-centred care and service to enable people to have the best possible lives, whatever their circumstances and whichever service they use. Our three goals - to be the choice for care and service; to be financially sustainable and secure; and to have dynamic people in a dynamic organisation are driven by our values and our understanding of mission as part of the Uniting Church.

Operational and Business plans that align with the Strategic Plan have been completed across the whole of UnitingCare Queensland and a reporting framework has been developed which will enable the Board and Executives to track progress on the implementation of the Strategic Plan.

ARRCS (Australian Regional Remote Community Services)

ARRCS was established in February 2014 as a new service group of UnitingCare Queensland, providing aged care and community services in the Northern Territory, the majority of the services being for Indigenous people. ARRCS was established as an incorporated entity and will operate as part of UnitingCare Queensland. A separate entity was established to enable a regulatory separation between ARRCS and Blue Care and Wesley Mission Brisbane. It will be supported by Blue Care/UnitingCare Queensland in areas of governance, quality, capital, facilities management, finance, HR and payroll, and procurement. A financial 'rescue' package has been supported by the Commonwealth Government and aged care providers from across the Uniting Church nationally. It will also be supported through the sale of property by the Assembly following the closure of one of the facilities in Darwin. UnitingCare Queensland will bear any other losses associated with ARRCS into the future.

Environmental sustainability

Our sustainability vision is to act responsibly through innovative and meaningful stewardship of energy and resources, as we respect the environment, protecting it for the communities in which we work and for future generations. We will seek to embed sustainable practices, to balance growth and social conscience, and to meet our goals without compromising our values, our people or the planet.

Our vision for sustainability is evident as we implement the first of our three-year sustainability plans across all areas of the organisation – Blue Care, UnitingCare Community, UnitingCare Health and UnitingCare Queensland Group Office. These plans provide strategies in common focus areas of energy, water, waste, transport, and ecologically sustainable development. Good progress is being made on all identified initiatives.

The Deloitte Economic and Social Value report of UnitingCare Queensland noted that recycling through Lifeline shops reduces Queensland's carbon footprint by 29.748 kg of carbon per year.

Culture and values

Building on the ongoing work of the UnitingCare Queensland values which underpin our way of being, significant programs to strengthen and transform culture have been undertaken across the organisation. UnitingCare Health has implemented an integrated performance management approach to health care aligned to our values. Known as 'Living Values' it is organised around six areas – service, people, quality, growth, financial and community and is a sequenced step-by-step process and roadmap to attain desired results and help leaders develop and achieve a values based excellence culture. Blue Care has partnered with well known management and organisational writer, Steve Lundin adopting the Fish! philosophy to develop and implement a culture that underpins its new service model *Blue Care Tailor Made*. UnitingCare Community has done significant development and training of its staff in participatory leadership approaches and has applied it in its preparatory work for the implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme.

Responding to reform agendas

As mentioned above, UnitingCare Queensland is working in the context of major reforms in most of the sectors we operate in: health, aged and community care, disability, child protection and community services. In response UnitingCare Queensland Service Groups have been undertaking very significant strategic work to review and transform service models and to consider carefully the focus of our work in a very changed environment that will be heavily contested by other providers, including many new entrants. We are facing an environment of change and uncertainty, and our capacity to be agile and reform our ways of operating is a priority.

Hospital in-the-Home

Blue Care has, under contract to the Queensland Government, commenced the provision of Blue Care Hospital in-the-Home services in Townville and Metro South Health and Hospital Network areas. This enables eligible patients to be treated for acute conditions in their own home as an alternative to being treated in a hospital.

Capital developments

A number of capital developments have been completed since the last Synod. These include:

- A new \$83M integrated aged care, retirement living and community services community at Carina.
- Lockyer Community and Respite Care Centre at Gatton
- Community and Respite Care Centre at Goondiwindi
- Community and Respite Care Centre at Coomera
- Community and respite Care Centre in Toowoomba
- St Stephen's digital hospital in Hervey Bay (see below)
- Drug and Alcohol Family Centre outside Cooktown
- The installation of a new hybrid theatre at St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital Brisbane, that will enable surgeons to perform highly complex surgery in minimally invasive ways

ARRCS has also commenced the building of a residential respite and care centre at Mutijulu in the Northern Territory and a new theatre complex is under construction at The Wesley Hospital.

Shared services

Group ICT

Over the past two years UnitingCare Queensland has been investing in the development of shared ICT infrastructure that will support enhanced client facing technology and enterprise systems. This is a major piece of work that will mature further over the next couple of years.

Group Procurement

Also in the past two years Group Procurement was formed through bringing together procurement functions, managing in excess of 750 contracts. These include new supply arrangements for motor vehicles, wound care, telecommunications, uniforms, bread, income protection insurance, heating, ventilation and air conditioning, and a variety of medical consumables.

The Synod and other entities within the Synod have benefitted from this work.

Data

Another key focus has been on data capture, management and analysis to drive timely, evidence-based decision making.

Group corporate accommodation

The UnitingCare Queensland Board and the Executive Leadership Team approved a new office location to accommodate UnitingCare Queensland group support and each of the service group support offices, at 192 Ann Street (the Mincom building) in the Brisbane CBD. This move is scheduled for October 2015.

The decision to bring all the group support offices together is another significant step towards achieving UnitingCare Queensland's objective of developing a shared culture and identity that supports the organisation to provide high quality, professional and compassionate care on behalf of the Uniting Church.

New training facilities

UnitingCare Health has launched two new training facilities – one for medical students and the other for nurses and allied health students - located at The Wesley Hospital but with training activities across each of the hospital campuses. The expanded teaching facility, formerly known as The Wesley Clinical School and renamed the UnitingCare Health Clinical School, has helped establish the campus as one of the State's largest private clinical training facilities, helping meet the need for state-of-the art medical, nursing and allied health clinical training places.

Lifeline 13 11 14

UnitingCare Community has streamlined the 24-hour Lifeline Crisis Support Line service and is now operating under a state-wide structure with the aim of substantially increasing call answer rates across the state.

Royal Commission into Institutional Responses into Child Sexual Abuse

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses into Child Sexual Abuse has challenged UnitingCare Queensland and the whole Church to be clear about the implications of the Commission's work for our care of children now and our responses to survivors who suffered sexual abuse as children while in the care of the Church.

Thus UnitingCare Queensland has completed significant and necessary work since the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses into Child Sexual Abuse, including evaluating the effectiveness of current policies and practices in relation to the safety of children in the organisation and identifying any gaps that need to be addressed. As part of this evaluation, a Child Safe Organisation Project was initiated to develop an organisation-wide framework, with policies and procedures that can be adapted within each service group to ensure a child safe culture and practice. The project will not only ensure legislative compliance but will include 'best efforts' to embed this child safe culture and practice.

Additionally work was conducted with the Church in Queensland and nationally, contributing to several policy submissions to the Royal Commission, submitted on behalf of the Uniting Church in Australia. These submissions responded to Royal Commission issue papers on topics pertinent to the work of UnitingCare Queensland. The CEO has also represented UnitingCare Australia at a private roundtable on redress and civil litigation reform conducted by the Royal Commission in Sydney.

Of particular note, was a submission made by the Uniting Church in Australia on the Royal Commission's issues paper 6, on redress. In the submission, the Church expresses support for a national redress scheme to meet the needs of survivors of abuse in organisations. It emphasises the need for such a scheme to take into account the needs of, and outcomes sought by survivors; the need to hold organisations accountable for abuses that occurred to children while in their care; and the need for fairness in contributions made by organisations.

Working towards our Priority Directions in the future

Many of our key directions for the future are embedded in 29 major initiatives identified in the new Strategic Plan; the key focus will be the implementation of the action plans associated with the three goals and the eight accompanying strategic priorities as mentioned previously.

Governance

- Further develop a contemporary governance framework which enables our success
- Work with the synod to ensure our governance arrangements and delegations deliver timely decision-making, support balanced risk-taking and drive effective implementation.

Other important initiatives

- Transition to shared corporate accommodation in Brisbane for UnitingCare Queensland Group Office and each of the Service Groups – UnitingCare Health, Blue Care and UnitingCare Community
- Progressing key capital projects across the state including refurbishment of a number of residential aged care services and completion of a new theatre complex at The Wesley Hospital
- Maintaining focus on understanding the lessons from the Royal Commission into Institutional Responses into Child Sexual Abuse and implications of these lessons for UnitingCare Queensland and the whole Church

Australian Regional and Remote Community Services

Key priorities for the coming period are:

- Development of sustainable models in each of the locations
- Ensuring 'fit for purpose' corporate support for the services
- Focus on workforce strategy including approaches to increase the employment of Indigenous people
- Maintaining and strengthening relationships with the Northern Synod and progressing conversation with Uniting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Christian Congress
- Building relationships with stakeholders and Indigenous Elders in each of the service locations

Responses to our Priority Directions since last Synod

Facilitating renewal of leadership for the mission of the Church

Board Renewal

The UnitingCare Queensland Board and Committees have recently gone through a renewal with the retirement of Heather Watson as Chair and Ray Richards as a Board Member and Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee, in March 2014, both having served as long term members of the Board. Craig Barke has been appointed as the new Chair. In order to spread workload, the Board has appointed a Deputy Chair, Dawson Petie.

The work of the Board's new Quality Committee, chaired by Board member Jude Munro, also continued with a focus on developing a common framework for identifying and assessing person centred care and service across the organisation.

As already mentioned the Board and executive have worked together over the past year to develop a new strategic plan for UnitingCare Queensland. This has been key in the development of shared priorities and shared leadership. The Board and executive continue to inform itself of key challenges facing people and communities and the organisation.

Values based leadership framework

The UnitingCare Queensland values based leadership framework has guided the development and training of our leaders. Based on our mission as part of the work of the Uniting Church, and our values, the framework uses the five leadership practices as developed by James Kouzes and Barry Posner in The Leadership Challenge, so that the people we lead will be engaged, enabled and empowered.

Among various leadership strategies, the leadership framework formed the basis for the inaugural UnitingCare Queensland Graduate Certificate in Leadership and Management which has been run in conjunction with Griffith University's Business School. Training materials for leaders at all levels of UnitingCare Queensland have also been developed, and the framework has been incorporated into a workshop on leadership as part of the executive/senior leaders orientation program.

Innovation Festival - Edge

As we face future challenges, UnitingCare Queensland's commitment to innovation has been strengthened. In a bold move to nurture a culture of innovation, UnitingCare Queensland held its inaugural innovation festival 'Edge' in August 2014. Nineteen events over four days in Brisbane and six regional venues, offered opportunities for staff to explore innovation and new ideas, and inspired them to be open to the future with optimism and hope. Events were held in many different locations, and included an innovation competition 'Edgeathon', where five teams developed five ideas to be pitched to a panel of judges. Edge also developed relationships with a number of innovation partners and supporters.

Working towards our Priority Directions in the future

Over the coming period UnitingCare Queensland will continue a focus and investment in leadership development.

Edge is the beginning of a commitment to innovation in UnitingCare Queensland, and will involve events throughout the year as well as an annual Edge festival. A UnitingCare Queensland Innovation Network will be established, as well as the development of the ideas from the Edgeathon innovation competition.

Responses to our Priority Directions since last Synod

Engaging in opportunities for intentional, open community connections and partnerships

Care and service across the whole organisation

UnitingCare has a vast number of partnerships with individuals and organisations given the nature of its work. The following provide some highlights from the reporting period.

Seniors Housing – New Farm

Blue Care has developed a formal partnership with BHC (formerly Brisbane Housing Company) to redevelop the old Blue Care Bowen Court complex in New Farm as affordable (rental) seniors housing. BHC is a not for profit company which provides and manages affordable and social housing. To make this project possible, Blue Care has contributed the property and some funds and BHC has matched the value of the property and the funds with cash. The project will also attract NRAS (National Rental Affordability Scheme) funding. Blue Care and BHC will each own half of the units on completion. BHC will also manage the property (including all rentals) on an ongoing basis. This new partnership with an affordable housing provider will contribute to the retention of affordable housing for seniors in inner city

Brisbane. It also increases our capacity to respond to this need through working with another provider who has vastly more experience than UnitingCare Queensland in managing affordable rental housing.

Trinity Health

UnitingCare Health has partnered with Mater Health Services to form Trinity Health as a vehicle to participate (potentially) in tenders for the redevelopment of the current Royal Children's Hospital site at Herston in Brisbane, once the Royal Children's Hospital site is vacated following the opening of the Lady Cilento's Children Hospital on the Mater site in South Brisbane. UnitingCare Health and the Mater have formed this partnership because of the mission aligned opportunities the site might offer, as well as a defensive strategy should another private health operator seek to develop another private hospital on the site which would have a detrimental impact on the sustainability of St Andrew's, The Wesley, and the Mater. The government has not declared its final preferred options for the use of the site; notwithstanding this Trinity Health has registered interest in the development. The board of Trinity Health is comprised of members appointed by the UnitingCare Queensland Board and the Mater Boards. Both Boards approved the appointment of the current Chair, the former Premier (1996-98), The Honourable Robert Borbidge.

Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Service – Cooktown

Blue Care Indigenous Services is set to open a new 'whole of family' residential service outside Cooktown that will work with families where one of the adults is recovering from drug and/or alcohol addiction. The families may come from across Cape York and be involved in the program for 6-12 months with transition and ongoing support beyond the stay in the residential facility. Over the past two years, our team has been working with elders and organisations across the Cape and an Advisory Council has been formed comprised of elders from those communities across the Cape.

The model of intervention is underpinned by a family therapy approach. It is supported by some of Australia's leading family therapists. Also during the two year development period, Indigenous family therapists have been trained and each of the non-Indigenous workers will be partnered with an Indigenous family therapist.

Butchella people

As part of the planning and design of the new St Stephen's Hervey Bay integrated digital hospital, formative and meaningful relationships have been developed with the local Indigenous Butchella people resulting in a bush medicine garden now included in the hospital. The medicine garden links the traditional to the modern ways of healing.

Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS)

The creation of ARRCS in response to the challenges the Assembly and the whole Church faced in continuing services to elders in the Northern Territory, some of whom are amongst the most vulnerable in Australia, was only possible because of partnerships that UnitingCare Queensland was able to forge with the Commonwealth Government, the Northern Synod, and Uniting Church aged care providers across the country who have helped in a number of practical ways during the past 18 months and who have provided some financial assistance to address the deficits during the first three years of operation.

A key focus is on developing a wide range of relationships in the communities in which ARRCS operates.

Participation in peak bodies

UnitingCare Queensland continues to chair and provide policy support to the CEO Conversation Group which brings together the Chief Executives of Anglicare, Centacare Brisbane, Churches of Christ Care,

Life Without Barriers, Mercy Disability Services, Mission Australia, The Benevolent Society in Queensland, Red Cross Queensland, Salvation Army, St Vincent de Paul, and Wesley Mission Brisbane. The group achieved a significant milestone in March 2014 with the establishment of the *Community Services Industry Alliance (CSIA)*. The CSIA's mandate is to build productivity, sustainability and connectivity within the community service industry. UnitingCare Queensland has participated strongly in the development of CSIA providing policy, development and marketing support. Heather Watson also agreed to become Chair of CSIA and UnitingCare Queensland Board member Dawson Petie has also joined the CSIA Board.

In addition to our work with UnitingCare Australia, UnitingCare Queensland key executives are involved in various peak bodies and government working groups. This includes board positions on Aged and Community Services Australia, Australian Private Hospitals Association and Lifeline Australia. The CEO is a member of the Program Board overseeing the transformation of Queensland Health and has also been appointed to the Premier's Taskforce on Family and Domestic Violence which is chaired by Dame Quentin Bryce AO.

Helena Goldie

UnitingCare Health has continued its partnership with Helena Goldie College of Nursing in the Solomon Islands. Twice a year a group of UnitingCare Health staff travel to the Solomon's and contribute their experience and expertise. It was a great milestone this year when the first two people sponsored by UnitingCare Health staff graduated as Registered Nurses. Four more students are now being sponsored to study to become Registered Nurses.

Christensen House

St Stephen's Hospital Hervey Bay has almost completed construction of Christensen House as part of its "Building Partnerships in our Community" strategy. The facility will provide motel style units for patients and family members from across the region. It has only been possible because of a very generous donation from the Christensen family and a local builder who has donated his time and expertise as the registered builder for the project. Many subcontractors and suppliers have also donated their skills or goods. It is truly a community project!

Research

UnitingCare Queensland has many important partnerships with universities in respect to clinical education and research. Research activity focuses on projects which provide improved outcomes in service delivery. These research projects cover a number of key areas, including how we can use technology effectively to reach out to our clients and how to measure the impact of services on client outcomes and client satisfaction.

During this last year, The Wesley Research Institute and St Andrew's Medical Institute merged to create a more sustainable institute for the future. This is now known as The Wesley - St Andrews Research Institute.

NAIDOC

NAIDOC Week provides the opportunity to share and acknowledge the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the nation. Each year UnitingCare Queensland hosts events across the state including a stand at the NAIDOC celebrations at the Musgrave Park Family Fun Day. UnitingCare Queensland, Blue Care, UnitingCare Community, UnitingCare Health came together on the day to highlight our services for Indigenous individuals and communities and to raise awareness of the 'Recognise' campaign; encouraging people to sign the pledge for Constitutional Recognition.

Working towards our Priority Directions in the future

- Maintain and develop our relationships with all levels of government to influence policy in our relevant sectors and advocate for social justice for individuals and communities in the areas we work.
- Maintain and develop relationships that are important to the delivery of services in the Northern Territory and with the delivery of Indigenous services in Far North Queensland, Cape York and the Torres Strait.
- Take opportunities to increase our engagement, planning and involvement with local networks and Church congregations especially where congregations are involved in community service activities.
- Schools Engagement Project – a project is being developed to connect UnitingCare Queensland services with Uniting Church Schools in Queensland. The initial phase has mapped UnitingCare Queensland services geographically to the Uniting Church schools. The next phase will include the development of an educational resource that links the services and the social issues that they present, with the schools curriculum so that schools can use these in their teaching programs. A liaison person will also be provided in UnitingCare Queensland for schools to connect to our services.
- Grow our relationship with Mater Health Services to explore the potential working together through Trinity Health or other projects that will strengthen the Church based, not-for-profit presence in health.

Key achievements/initiatives

- As always UnitingCare Queensland's most important achievement is the delivery of services every day to thousands of Queenslanders.
- Overcoming extraordinary complexity and challenges to enable the creation of Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS) and the transition of aged care services in the Northern Territory from Frontier Services to ARRCS was a very significant achievement.
- The expansion of St Stephen's Hospital Hervey Bay, from a day hospital to a fully integrated state-of-the-art digital hospital is well underway. Its opening will coincide with the meeting of the 31st Synod. The new eHealth technologies at St Stephen's will enable patient data to be uploaded automatically to the patient's electronic medical record from monitoring systems, resulting in improved accuracy, efficiency, quality and safety.

Timely clinical decision making will be further enabled through readily accessible clinical information, care pathways and decision support, all based on international best practice. This will include real time mobile clinical alerts on allergies, medications, abnormal vital signs and test results – the aim being that clinicians will have the right device, at the right time, in the right place. Many aspects of St Stephen's are a first in Australia.

- Completion of capital projects including Azure Blue at Carina, Community Centres at Gatton, Goondiwindi, Coomera, and Toowoomba, the family drug and alcohol residential facility outside Cooktown and the development of a new hybrid theatre at St Andrew's War Memorial Hospital.
- After successfully negotiating a difficult period in 2013 at The Wesley Hospital following two positive cases of legionella, best practice strategies and protocols to combat Legionella have been

implemented. A comprehensive water management program, involving routine water testing and reporting, combined with ongoing upgrades to the hospital's water system is now complete. The comprehensive work undertaken at The Wesley has also informed new regulatory guidelines for testing and water treatment across all public and private hospitals in Queensland.

- There were many milestones and celebrations since the last Synod. Of greatest significance was Blue Care's 60th anniversary year! Sixty events were held across the state including events at the West End Uniting Church where it all began. The celebrations culminated with a high tea hosted by the Queensland Governor at Government House and Brisbane's landmark Story Bridge bathed in blue light and displaying two large banners commemorating the celebration in August 2013.

At a local level, Blue Care Mackay and Sarina celebrate 50 years - growing from 14 clients cared for by three staff, to assisting 610 clients each month, supported by 88 staff members.

- Other recognitions included:

UnitingCare Community, in the central Queensland region, was awarded the NAIDOC 2013 Community Organisation of the Year in acknowledgement of the work and overall attitude of the organisation towards genuine reconciliation. Additionally, three central Queensland staff were given Encouragement Awards under the NAIDOC Community Person of the Year category.

All UnitingCare Health hospitals achieved outstanding results in the Press Ganey patient surveys. Underlining these excellent outcomes, St Andrew's War memorial Hospital won the Press Ganey Associates "Australian Success story" Award 2014 and The Wesley Hospital was rated the best in its category for all of Australia and New Zealand.

The Sunshine Coast Private Hospital was voted the best maternity unit in Queensland and the third best in Australia in the Medibank Maternity Experience Index and delivered its 10 000th baby. It also received the 'International Hardwiring Excellence' award in 2014 from the Studer Group, an international health care consultancy.

UnitingCare Community was a successful finalist in the Business Eco-efficiency category at the Queensland Premier's Sustainability Awards in 2014, in recognition of its outstanding performance in improving operational efficiency by applying environmentally beneficial practices to dramatically reduce energy, water and waste.

Blue Care was recognised with the Organisation Award in the 2014 Aged and Community Services Australia Queensland Aged Care Awards.

UnitingCare Queensland's CEO Anne Cross was selected as one of Queensland's 125 leading women by the YWC A in Queensland.

Challenges/risks as we progress:

Key Challenge Number One – Navigating the Reform Agendas

Reform is occurring in all the major sectors in which UnitingCare operates.

The major drivers of change in our sectors over the coming years will be increasing customer expectation and empowerment (Consumer Directed Care in aged care and NDIS in disability); increasing market contestability from new entrants including multinationals, for profits, sole operators and community collaborations; technology is changing the way that consumers interact with services; it is

creating new delivery channels (e.g. Telehealth) and enabling different and better ways of doing things. Some need, and therefore demand, will increase in scale or size (ageing population, impact of chronic disease on health and well being, increasing numbers of children at risk and regional and rural population shifts). Some clients will remain marginalised by their needs or through their place of living.

To be competitive and relevant in these environments, it is an imperative that UnitingCare Queensland is able to demonstrate positive outcomes for our consumers, anticipate their preferences, and be responsive and agile in exploring alternative models of service delivery. It will be important that UnitingCare Queensland becomes more efficient, embracing enabling technology and be willing to respond to new business opportunities. Our workforce will need to be very flexible.

In similar reforms in the United Kingdom, many charitable organisations did not succeed in a much more contested 'market' and charitable organisations now have a much smaller share of overall service delivery especially in aged care. Navigating the reform agendas will be our priority over coming years and will take all of our attention.

Key Challenge Number Two – Financial sustainability

UnitingCare Queensland has an extraordinary footprint across Queensland and now in the Northern Territory. 73 per cent of Blue Care services are in 60 per cent of the most disadvantaged areas of Queensland and a majority are regional, rural, and remote areas of Queensland and the Northern Territory. This is very challenging from a financial sustainability perspective as delivery of services in these communities is inherently more challenging and costly. In order to be sustainable, UnitingCare Queensland will need to seek growth in higher value services in order to balance our overall portfolio which includes this very significant commitment to regional, remote and Indigenous community services.

Key Challenge Number Three – Fit for purpose structures

This year, UnitingCare Queensland with the approval of the Synod created a new incorporated entity Australian Regional and Remote Community Services Ltd in order to create a 'fit for purpose' entity that could operate in the Northern Territory and protect Blue Care and Wesley Mission Brisbane from any future regulatory failure of the Northern Territory services given their recent history.

The Royal Commission into Institutional Responses into Child Sexual Abuse has signalled that it will make recommendations regarding the corporate structures of Churches and community service organisations.

Additionally we also expect that agility in responding to the various reform agendas may require UnitingCare, the Synod and the Church nationally to consider different corporate structures including the possibility of new entities, new partnerships and joint ventures across Synod boundaries

UnitingCare Australia has commenced exploration of what these imperatives might mean for Uniting Church agencies and is exploring the possibility of a national entity for the delivery of services on a national or cross-synod basis.

In a more immediate sense, UnitingCare Queensland's need for a contemporary constitution, revised By-Laws and resolution of its financial contribution to the Synod remain outstanding.

Recommendations/strategic decisions for Synod:

UnitingCare Queensland does not require any strategic decisions of the Synod at this meeting, although the Synod is asked to note the rapidly changing environment in which UnitingCare Queensland is operating and responding.

UnitingCare Queensland will bring a General Proposal to the Synod recommending that the Synod actively support the campaign for recognition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Australian Constitution.

It is recommended that the 31st Synod receive the report of UnitingCare Queensland.

Contact for Report questions:

Name: Anne Cross

email: Anne.Cross@ucareqld.com.au

phone: (07) 3025 2001

Report for 31st Queensland Synod October 2014



Report from **Wesley Mission Brisbane**



Context:

Wesley Mission Brisbane (WMB) is an integral part of the Uniting Church in Queensland and operates as a mission activity of the Albert Street Uniting Church. Since its inception in 1907 WMB's our purpose has been to participate in the mission of God towards, reconciliation, transformation, justice and hope for all people. In and through this mission and ministry we are actively committed to 'Uniting in Christ, acting with love, witnessing in faith and working for justice'.

At the heart of WMB's approach to mission is developing authentic relationships with integrity and compassion and we strive to live this out in all that we do. We are deeply embedded in local communities across South east Queensland delivering much needed support services that strengthen, empower and uphold those people who are most at risk in our community.

As a Parish Mission of the Albert St Uniting Church, WMB is committed to worship, witness and service through the activities of the WMB Albert Street Uniting Church and within our age care, employment, and childcare and community service activities. These community based services support more than 80,000 people of all ages and stages of life across South East Queensland, the Fraser Coast and also throughout Australia as we support more than 7,000+ members of the deaf community (through Auslan interpreting services.)

Wherever we can, we seek to work with congregations within the Uniting Church as part of shared mission activities – this is fundamental in demonstrating our commitment to the shared Call and Vision of the Uniting Church in Queensland.

WMB was the first provider of community based nursing (1907) and also residential age care (1936) in Queensland and continues to seek innovative strategies and measured risk taking approaches in response to changing community needs. An ongoing challenge to our services is meeting the changing needs of the community and hence innovation remains one of our core Values. We see our greatest risk is **not being sufficiently well organised and agile** to identify needs in the community and pursue the opportunities to meet those needs .

Although a relatively large organisation (with an annual operating budget of \$150M in 2014/15) with approximately 2,400 staff and more than 1,300 volunteers, WMB remains fluid in its ability to respond quickly and effectively to needs within the community. It will be this flexibility and responsiveness that will see WMB well placed to continue to express our mission as 'we walk alongside people in need offering care and compassion and promoting choice independence and community well-being'.

Government policy, funding and service priorities are changing at a rapid rate with two major policy initiatives in 2013/14 affecting our work within the community. First, the *Living Longer, Living Better package* is being implemented over a number of years and is impacting on both service delivery and funding within aged care and in particular older people and their families. Secondly, while the National Disability Insurance Scheme is seeking to provide a positive framework for future reform of the disability sector much of the policy detail is still unknown and adequate funding options remain uncertain. There is a well founded emphasis on improving client choice, control and access for residents and clients for all government funded services and WMB will need to be agile and empowered with strong and flexible information systems to meet these upcoming challenges and stakeholder accountabilities.

Over the next five years, there will be significant construction and redevelopment plans underway across our aged care communities including: John Wesley Gardens in Geebung and Sinnamon Village in Sinnamon Park. Also the expansion of community services for people living with mental illness through the NDIS reforms.

WMB is one of the many faces of the Uniting Church engaging in God's mission in the world – the Uniting Church logo is at the heart of the WMB logo and we hope that our prayers, our people, our resources and our worship are seen as part of our Church's commitment to 'Uniting in Christ, acting with love, witnessing in faith and working for justice'.

Responses to our Priority Directions since last Synod

Enabling a demonstrated commitment to the shared Call and Vision

At WMB's core since establishment in 1907 'Uniting in Christ, acting with love, witnessing in faith and working for justice.

Planning

Adopted the five-year WMB Strategic Plan

Our Vision – A compassionate, just and inclusive society

Our Mission – We walk alongside people in need offering care and compassion and promoting choice independence and community well-being'.

Supporting our elderly citizens

Our heritage and future is indicative of how we support older people to live a life with meaning and choice in spite of frailty and isolation. In our residential age care services the focus is on supporting the person but the impacts on the wider family are also significant. Each year we support 1,400 people in residential settings, 1,000+ people through in - home care services and 10,000+ people who access a wide range of community based services.

Collaborative partnerships

- Established Wesley Care Tewanin, supported accommodation for young adults living with high care needs in partnership with Noosa Coastal Uniting Church (UC)
- WMB is supporting the Synod's Grow Faith Project - which will deliver a quality discipleship process and resources using web and mobile technology for high school students that is scalable, transferrable and accessible
- Established a Wesley Child Care Centre as part of the Gap Uniting Church local mission activities. WMB also partners with Toowong Uniting Church through the Toowong Child Care Centre and Jahjumbeen occasional care. WMB currently provides centre based and in home child care and education for 1,300 children each week.
- WMB provides a wide range of support services for 4,000+ older people living in the Moreton Bay Council area supporting social connection and community engagement including: in - home care; respite and centre based support; community transport and home maintenance services.
- WMB has progressively developed the Wheller on the Park Community for Retirement over the last five years. 2014 has seen the completion of the final stage and 500 people now are part of a wonderful example of a supportive community with a strong Christian values based culture.
- WMB provides safe, fun and meaningful activities for hundreds of young people after school and during school holidays at Thrower House at Palm Beach and Community Centres at Ormeau, Upper Coomera & Runaway Bay. These services also include support for young people excluded from the school system.

WMB Albert Street Uniting Church operates:

- Art from the Margins, is a community art program that assists more than 250+ people on the fringes of society to re- engage with the community and exhibit their work in public spaces through

participating in practical art workshops. In 2014 the main exhibition is the Art from the Margins Brisbane Festival Exhibition in Brisbane's City Hall (from 12th September – 14th September.)

- Open Church at Albert St for four hours a day for visitors for prayer, reflection and support - 6,000+ visitors come each year.
- Weekly English classes for 80+ young international students from non-English speaking backgrounds. This is supported by volunteers from the Congregation and the wider community. Includes social activities and Bible studies.

Community Meal from our Brunswick Street Fortitude Valley Centre. Although centred on a free meal supported by volunteers, this is all about community connectedness for people experiencing isolation and homelessness.

Working towards our Priority Directions in the future

We will pursue our five WMB **Strategic Priorities** –

1. Responding to people in need and strengthening the communities in which we operate.
2. Being recognised for service excellence by putting those that we serve first.
3. Empowering and valuing our people who are committed to our Values and Mission.
4. Growing our community recognition and support.
5. Ensuring financial and environmental sustainability.

Growth and diversification in services

- grow residential age care places and redevelop age care communities;
- grow and diversify support opportunities for people living with disability;
- support more people living with mental illness;
- expand retirement living options;
- strengthen our values base culture and leadership culture;
- pursue optimal missional use of land and buildings;
- grow our philanthropic support base;
- develop additional business income streams to support mission activities.

WMB will seek to continue to develop **mission partnerships with congregations in areas of common endeavour**. Plans are underway to utilise:

- The Moreton Rivers Presbytery Ashgrove Uniting Church buildings as a base for our Child Care and Family Day Care support office.
- Uniting Church surplus land in Wynnum West as a location for the next WesleyCare supported accommodation for 10 adults with high care needs (anticipated construction in 2015).

WMB Albert Street and St Andrews UC are seeking opportunity for exploring mission partnerships in the city.

To renovate the Brunswick St centre to become a community hub and expand Community Meal and widen the invitation for people for community activity and connections.

Responses to our Priority Directions since last Synod

Promoting a discipline of prayer and spirituality (individual and corporate)

Understanding and supporting a yearning for God and meaningful relationships at the heart every person

- A new leadership position of Spiritual and Pastoral Care Coordinator has been introduced and will enhance organisational thinking, focus and cultural change around the meaning of 'person centred care'.
- Four chaplains work across WMB's aged care communities supporting pastoral care, spiritual discovery and worship opportunities for 1,300 residents each year.
- Active lay led worship at Wheller on the Park retirement community
- Open Church has been happening at WMB Albert Street UC for over 14 years, thanks to a band of volunteers who give of their time each week day. The Church is open for 4 hours a day for prayer and reflection and is also open to visitors to Brisbane. Over 10,000 people visit the church each year.

WMB Albert St UC offers four services a week, including a lunch time service for city workers and visitors. 2014 marks the 125th anniversary of the church in its current central location and the church is known for being an oasis of prayer within the city. Begin reporting here

Working towards our Priority Directions in the future

- Explore further integration and understanding of pastoral and spiritual care as integral to 'person centred' care across all WMB services.
- Worship services will continue to grow in our retirement communities.
- Many of the residents in our retirement communities are promoting opportunities for prayer, personal and spiritual reflection amongst their community.

A culture of prayer and spirituality is growing as people experience community and find meaning through volunteering and supporting their friends.

Responses to our Priority Directions since last Synod

Developing sustainable mission orientated organisation (way of being) for the Church in Queensland

optimising resource utilisation, innovation and 'growing the pie'

- Key WMB leaders are involved in Synod structures such as Synod Standing Committee, SSC Working Groups, Synod Boards and Committees, and national Uniting Church advisory bodies (e.g. UnitingCare Australia).

- WMB has financially supported the UnitingCare Qld establishment of ARCCS as part of the wider UnitingCare network on ageing contribution to sustaining Frontier Services age care in NT. WMB has supported PASCOP with seeding funding.
- Ongoing engagement in a process of conversation to clarify governance roles, relationships and responsibilities within the Qld Synod (regarding WMB, UnitingCare and Synod). The WMB Governance Manual is being renewed.
- Invested in the development of Core information systems and successfully implemented a new: finance system; human resource system; clinical system in residential age care and community care. This has improved internal communication, and given staff access to client information wherever/whenever they need this (almost all carers are now utilising computer tablets for care service information and recording.)
- Wi-Fi is being rolled out across all age care facilities for staff and residents (a 100 year old resident is Skyping his 102 year old friend living at home.)
- Undertaken significant work on the broad range of risk identification and management processes across WMB including: internal review, internal audit, risk management and fraud awareness and prevention programs.
- Continuing a process of review of our property holdings to optimise missional usage and outcomes or financial returns (or both where possible.)
- WMB is targeting a modest financial surplus result while allocating resources to grow new and innovative services some of which receive no government funding.

Wesley House and other WMB facilities are made available within the wider Uniting Church for a wide range of free Church meetings.

Working towards our Priority Directions in the future

Continuing active involvement within Synod structures.

During 2015 we plan to update the WMB Constitution.

One of our 5 Strategic Priorities is to invest in enhancing communication and collaboration systems and improving information systems – releasing more staff time for ‘person centred care’.

‘Growing the pie’ – is a key activity -building new income sources, marketing our services to maintain occupancy, optimising government and philanthropic funding. We will continue to innovate.

Responses to our Priority Directions since last Synod

Facilitating renewal of leadership for the mission of the Church

‘identify emerging leaders, empower a culture of innovation where leaders can thrive’

Governance

- WMB governance policy encourages engaging the right people, with motivation for mission, the right skills mix, providing professional development support and succession planning. The culture of robust respectful conversation around ideas is essential.

Innovation and measured risk taking

- WMB Residential Aged Care services are on a journey to embrace the Eden Alternative™ approach – to focus on a life worth living and emphasising identity, growth, autonomy, security, connectedness, meaning and joy. This is the focus for residents but is also a focus for staff. Anam Cara in Bray Park was the first fully recognised Eden age care home in Qld. Eden recognises the importance of embedding a culture of identifying emerging leaders as well as building a culture of innovation where leaders can thrive.
- Provided a range of opportunities for education mentoring and conversation for emerging leaders.
- Provided leadership pathways within WMB. Giving leaders a reason to want to stay and contribute.
- Supporting a positive approach for our mature workforce – instigating the Staying On Program to attract and retain mature workers.
- Provided accessible child care arrangements at Wheller Gardens (for staff including emerging leaders).
- WMB has had the privilege of providing opportunities for ministry candidates to experience leadership within the life of city congregation and involvement in community development activities.

Working towards our Priority Directions in the future

Continuing to embed the culture of robust respectful conversation around ideas is essential.

Achieve full Eden Registration across all age care homes and pursue Eden registration and recognition for Corporate Service functions.

Striving to keep the leaders within WMB.

Continuing to provide flexible work opportunities for mature leaders.

Responses to our Priority Directions since last Synod

Engaging in opportunities for intentional, open community connections and partnerships

WMB supports 80,000 people in South east Qld and 7,000 members of the deaf community (across Australia).

Collaborative Partnerships

- Commencing the development of 'Mantle' supported accommodation in Mitchelton for 14 people living with mental illness before the 31st Synod. The intent is to support people to live a life which is meaningful and where connections with work, community and family are strengthened. WMB also

supports young people experiencing mental health concerns through auspicing Headspace services at Hervey Bay.

- At the request of a number of smaller community based organisations WMB has undertaken to support and grow community services initiatives by 'merging' with YHES House Southport (supporting young women pre and post birth and single parents and families), Elorac Centre at Ellen Grove (community development, young women and local indigenous residents). We are partnering with Forest Lake Uniting Church in their local 'Bike Project' engaging young people in local schools.
- OzHarvest Brisbane , operated by WMB is now 'rescuing' 10 tonnes of food per week (30,000 meals a week) from 160+ food outlets .This food, that would otherwise end up in landfill, is delivered free of charge to more than 80+ charitable and church based organisations across SE Qld (Uniting Church meals/local food support include: Pine Rivers UC; Kangaroo Point UC; Park UC Highgate Hill; Balmoral UC; El Shadai Foodbank, Redcliffe UC and Margate Baptist.)
- WMB is partnering with Queensland Kids to deliver Queensland's first children's hospice. Hummingbird House at our Wheller Gardens Chermiside site. HH will provide respite and palliative care for children with diagnosed life limiting conditions and their families (construction starts early 2015.)
- We have again partnered with the Youngcare Foundation to provide supported accommodation for young adults living with high care needs. This will be our third partnership, and we will be the care providers at their new share house for four residents at Woolloowin which is expected to open before the end of 2014. Begin reporting here

Working towards our Priority Directions in the future

- We plan to identify another location and seek partners for a second 'Mantle' over the next two years.
- Currently supporting another merger with a smaller community organisation – we anticipate there will be further need for consolidation and support of smaller organisations over coming years.
- WMB in partnership with OzHarvest will expand the reach and capacity of the service to support more charities across South East Queensland
- Initially Hummingbird House will be centre based. In the future we intend to support children with life limiting conditions and their families in their homes and through affordable holiday options.

Key achievements/initiatives

- Supporting significantly more people in need in Queensland and across Australia – our diversity of services for people of all ages and stages of life.
- Completion of the Wheller on the Park Community for Retirement at Wheller Gardens Chermiside (340 apartments – achieved full occupancy.) This is a supportive Christian community for more than 500+people many of whom are active Uniting Church members.

- Finalisation of planning and approval for our next substantial capital redevelopment of our age care buildings (as the first age care provider in Qld we also have many older buildings.) Renovation of the new John Wesley Gardens community at Geebung starts later in 2014.
- WMB has been sought out by a number of smaller community service organisations for merging (congruence of Values.)
- The partnership with Queensland kids and subsequent development of Hummingbird House to support children and their families with life limiting conditions will commence soon at Wheller Gardens.

Challenges/risks as we progress:

- Increasing diversity in response to need brings challenges with planning and oversight.
- How do we harness the size and influence of our national presence in age care and community services across Australia? Our structures may limit our potential due to the national bodies, Synod boundaries and organisational identities. Within the UnitingCare Australia National body alternative structures are being examined and there has been fabulous cooperation amongst members of the various network bodies over the last 2 years.
- Attracting and supporting our people/ workforce of the future given the substantial increase in numbers of older Australians and the support needs of people living with disability.
- Supporting residents and families as they navigate the new funding arrangements for age care established by the Government.
- Funding in age care and expectations of residents and families relative to the funding available. It is not uncommon to receive a resident in residential age care from hospital (where the funding available may be \$800 per day) with an expectation of providing a wider range of care and support in our residential homes (where the maximum funding is, at the time of this report, \$250 per day). 70% of organisational costs are staff wages and related costs – funding typically rises by 1 to 1.5% less p.a. than government funding.
- Competition and consolidation with the entry/growth of 'for-profit' providers. The danger, long-term access and equity of service where some providers will focus on high net worth people.
- Will the impact of services available when the National Disability Insurance Scheme is rolled out in Qld match the expectations that have been raised and particularly the needs?

Contact for Report questions:

Name: Geoff Batkin
email: g.batkin@wmb.org.au