

Queensland Health

# Skin Cancer Prevention Project 2022-2026

Progress report year 1 – August 2023



**Queensland**  
Government

# Contents

---

<b>Executive Summary</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Background</b>	<b>2</b>
Queensland population health data on sun safety	2
<b>Skin Cancer Stakeholders</b>	<b>3</b>
Steering Committee	3
<b>Project overview</b>	<b>4</b>
Project goal	4
Objectives	4
Priority regions	4
Project elements	5
<b>Element 1 – State-wide social marketing</b>	<b>6</b>
Achievements to date	6
Planned for delivery	7
Future communications	7
<b>Element 2 – Outreach Early Detection Services</b>	<b>8</b>
Defining a new service for Queensland Health	8
CheckUP	8
Achievements to date	8
Services delivered	9
<b>Element 3 – Community activation and health promotion</b>	<b>10</b>
Achievements to date	10
Planned	11
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation Framework</b>	<b>12</b>
Co-design led by University of Queensland	12
Draft Monitoring and Evaluation Framework	12
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>13</b>
Contact for more information	13
<b>Appendix 1 – Steering Committee Membership</b>	<b>14</b>

# Executive Summary

Queensland Health was allocated \$8.4 million over four years in June 2022 to deliver skin cancer prevention and create early detection services. Fourteen months on, in August 2023, the project has been shaped by leading skin cancer researchers and stakeholders and has developed and is delivering against three project elements.

## Element 1 – Social Marketing

Stakeholders advised that primary prevention of skin cancer offers the best return on investment, and more than sixty percent of the overall budget is directed to social marketing. Achievements in year one includes delivery of the winter marketing campaign “Don’t let your guard down”, sponsorship of four large scale outdoor sporting events and sponsorship enabling 117 additional face-to-face training for outdoor workers and apprentices.

## Element 2 – Outreach Skin Cancer Early Detection Services

The skin cancer early detection outreach service is focused on underserved locations in five priority Hospital and Health Service regions. Queensland Health contracted CheckUP to commission the outreach services and CheckUP has applied its commissioning framework to assess needs and plan integrated services. Outreach services were delivered in Moura, Clermont, Karumba and Cloncurry in May and June 2023. Across the four clinics delivered to the end of June 23, 76 people had a skin examination and 30 had cancers detected and treated (including one melanoma).

## Element 3 – Community activation and health promotion

Central Queensland HHS has employed a health promotion officer. Achievements include identifying sun-safety opportunities with eleven local governments, connecting with people who have a lived experience of melanoma, distributing 50 portable shade structures to regional sporting organisations, and partnering with the sport and recreation sector to build sun safety into policy and practice.

## Project Monitoring and Evaluation

A monitoring and evaluation framework for the project has been drafted by independent experts and will be finalised with input from the Steering Committee.

The project enjoys strong support across stakeholder groups and will continue to develop partnerships and maximise the impact of this investment in sun safety.

# Background

Queensland has the highest rates of both melanoma and non-melanoma skin cancers in the world. Queensland's proximity to the equator results in moderate to extreme ambient ultraviolet (UV) radiation all year. As a result of climate conditions and social and cultural preferences for an outdoor lifestyle, and inadequate use of sun safe behaviours, Queensland has significantly elevated rates of melanoma.

In June 2022, the Queensland Government provided additional funding of \$8.384 million over four years to Queensland Health to deliver a skin cancer prevention campaign and skin cancer early detection services.

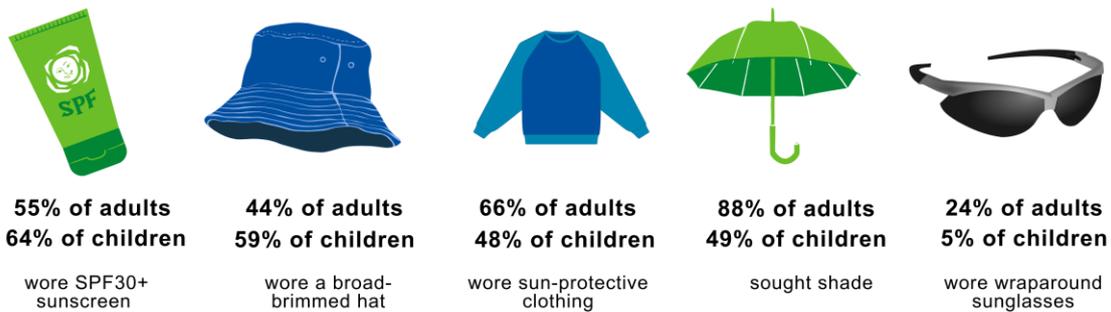
## Queensland population health data on sun safety

### Sun protection behaviours and sunburn in Queensland

Data from the 2022 Report of the Chief Health Officer Queensland



#### At most times in summer when outside



#### sunburn



Figure 1: Use of protective behaviours and sunburn

# Skin Cancer Stakeholders

Queensland has a well-established and strong, stakeholder network in Skin Cancer Prevention Queensland (SCPQ). SCPQ includes active members who are leaders in skin cancer research and clinical practice, leading non-government organisations such as the Cancer Council Queensland, Melanoma Patients Australia and Danger Sun Overhead as well as representatives from Government Departments.

Consultation with SCPQ members occurred following the budget announcement and strong messages from stakeholders were:

- Prioritise primary rather than secondary prevention because it is the most cost-effective strategy for reducing the burden of skin cancer.
- No cancer control agency or specialist medical college recommends population-wide screening for skin cancer.
- Clinicians qualified to provide skin checks and treat skin cancer are in short supply in parts of Queensland. The service must include treatment and not just checks.
- Prioritise some locations because state-wide coverage of services isn't possible within this funding envelope.

Table 1: Engagement opportunities and key stakeholder input

	QIMR Berghofer	University of Queensland	Royal Australian College of General Practice	Cancer Council Qld	Melanoma Patients Australia	Queensland Cancer Clinical Network
Initial consultation on project design	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	
Project Steering Committee	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Co-design of Monitoring and Evaluation Framework	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Early Detection Service Advisory Group			✓	✓	✓	

## Steering Committee

The project is guided by a project steering committee who has responsibility to approve key documents such as the project plan and provide advice. The steering committee meets three times a year and has six external and five government members. The steering committee approved the overall project plan in March 2023. The membership of the Steering Committee is in Appendix 1.

# Project overview

## Project goal

To improve sun safety to prevent and reduce the impact of skin cancer in Queensland.

The budget commitment established clear project parameters for a prevention campaign and services and, in consultations with stakeholders, a program logic model was developed and refined.

## Objectives

- Increase adoption of the five sun-safe behaviours
- Reduce the incidence of sunburn
- Improve equity of access to early detection services
- Increase community leadership for sun safety, policy and shade creation

## Priority regions

Stakeholders emphasised the value of a targeted approach. Outreach services could not be delivered right across the state so five priority Hospital and Health Services (HHS) were purposefully selected based on data in the 2020 Chief Health Officer report showing higher sunburn rates and lower uptake of sun-safe behaviours. These HHSs are all in regional Queensland where there are fewer clinicians with a specific qualification in skin cancer.

South West  
HHS

North West  
HHS

Central  
Queensland  
HHS

Mackay HHS

Townsville  
HHS

# Project elements

## Element 1 - State-wide social marketing

- Develop an overarching communication strategy
- Research, develop and design campaigns
- Plan, execute and monitor media buys
- Develop stakeholder kit to enable supporters to promote key messages
- Provide and monitor strategic sponsorships and partnerships

## Element 2 - Outreach Early Detection Services

- Undertake needs assessment and service mapping to identify service gaps
- Commission service providers including monitoring credentialing
- Service providers deliver early detection services in underserved locations
- Monitor service provision and report on outcomes

## Element 3 - Community Activation and Health Promotion

- Encourage local governments to champion sun safety in their community
- Establish a community of practice for sun safety stakeholders and champions
- Resource and steward local sun safety, policy and shade creation initiatives

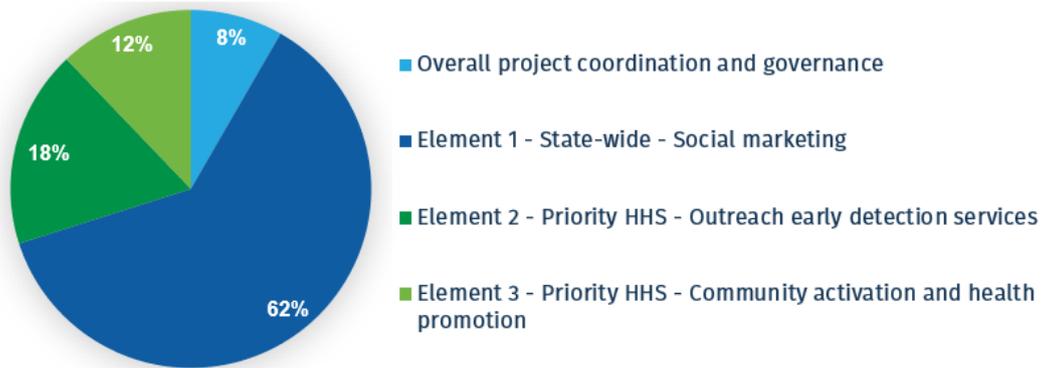


Figure 2 Budget allocation to project elements

# Element 1 – State-wide social marketing

Element 1 of the project comprises state-wide social marketing and communications to promote sun-safe behaviours and encourage self-skin checks.

For this element, Queensland Health commissioned consumer research that highlights that, while Queenslanders are generally aware of the 5 key protective behaviours (commonly referred to as ‘slip, slop, slap, seek and slide’), they do not practise them enough. There have been minimal changes in both attitudes towards sun protection and the adoption of sun protective behaviours in recent years, and there is opportunity to improve Queenslanders’ uptake of sun safe behaviours.

To help address this, Queensland Health developed a 4-year ‘Increasing the uptake of sun safe behaviours in Queensland’ communications strategy, aiming to encourage Queenslanders to reduce their exposure to ultraviolet radiation and incidence of sunburn, and to increase their uptake of the 5 sun protection behaviours.

Under the strategy, we will continue to develop annual sun safety communication plans underpinned by a multidisciplinary approach across all elements of strategic communications.

## Achievements to date

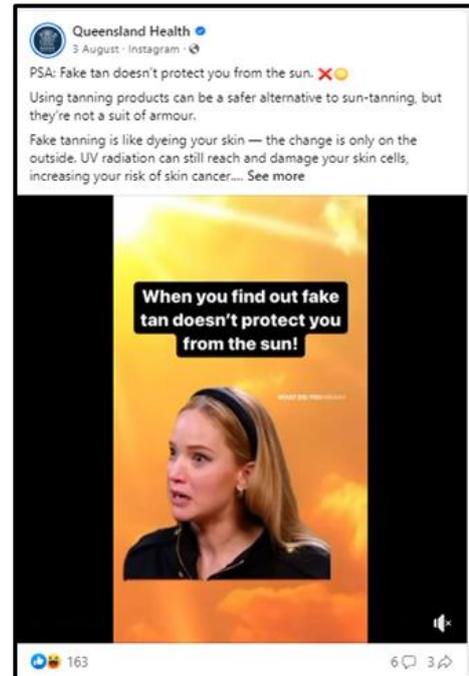
The first phase of the communications strategy was delivered throughout winter 2023, with a primary target audience of Queensland adults aged 18 to 34 years. This phase included:

- Mass media social marketing campaign: ‘Don’t let your guard down’ (watch the videos), focused on highlighting the risks of UV exposure, and emphasising the 5 sun safe behaviours
- Media: Ministerial media release to announce winter marketing campaign launch
- Sponsorship: Atlas Events – Brisbane, Cairns, and Sunshine Coast marathons to support/promote sun-safe running (outdoor enthusiasts)
- Internal communications: Article in the all-staff e-newsletter (150K+ Queensland Health employees) promoting registration for Atlas Events marathons, and role modelling sun safe physical activity as part of Queensland Health running teams
- Sponsorship: Danger Sun Overhead, to deliver 117 additional face-to-face training sessions in North Queensland (independent locations and through TAFEs) to reach outdoor workers in high-risk industries (e.g., construction)
- Media: Channel 9 exclusive media opportunity with then-Health Minister Yvette D’ath, featuring 3D melanoma detector at the Princess Alexandra Hospital in Brisbane



- Media: Radio interview with public health expert, Simone Braithwaite, Prevention Strategy Branch, on the 5 Ss of sun safety, and general skin cancer messaging
- Social media: Ongoing social media posts across Queensland Health accounts on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, and X (formerly Twitter)

This first winter phase of the communications strategy is currently being evaluated to inform future activity as we move into summer. Market research was also conducted with young Queenslanders 12-17 years of age and their parents to better understand this audience's sun safe behaviours, attitudes, and perceptions, to enable Queensland Health to extend future communications to this audience.



## Planned for delivery

The next phase of the communications strategy planned for summer 2023–24 will continue to target Queenslanders aged 18 to 34 years across the state. This phase is planned to include:

- Mass media social marketing campaign: summer sun safety campaign, which will aim to drive personal relevance for the target audience, highlighting the gravity of risk and the relevance of the 5 sun-safe protective behaviours for modifying risk, specifically for this 18-to-34-year-old audience.
- Social media: Ongoing social media posts including Queensland Health Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn accounts.
- Stakeholder engagement: continued stakeholder engagement to provide strategic communications support for other community organisations seeking to amplify sun safety messaging.

## Future communications

The focus on Queenslanders aged 18-34 years will continue as this group is particularly at risk because of their poor adoption of sun protection behaviours.

As sun protection is important at any age, in line with the communications strategy, Queensland Health will also introduce more targeted messaging to:

- parents and carers of children aged 11 years and under – parents play an important role both in helping children develop good sun safe habits and as role models.
- Queenslanders aged 35 years and over – it's never too late to be sun safe and emphasise self-skin checks.
- young people aged 12–17 years – to develop sun safe habits, reduce sunburn rates and increase knowledge of melanoma risk.

# Element 2 – Outreach Early Detection Services

## Defining a new service for Queensland Health

General practitioners and dermatologists usually provide skin cancer detection and treatment services. The Australian Government supports these services through Medicare. While Queenslanders in the South East corner can access skin cancer early detection services through a range of providers, significant inequity of access exists across the state, particularly in regional and remote contexts.

Prevention Strategy Branch (PSB) consulted with stakeholders to identify the core elements of an early detection service which are shown in figure 2. Stakeholders emphasised the importance of the service being provided by qualified providers, inclusive of treatment and well-integrated with local care pathways.

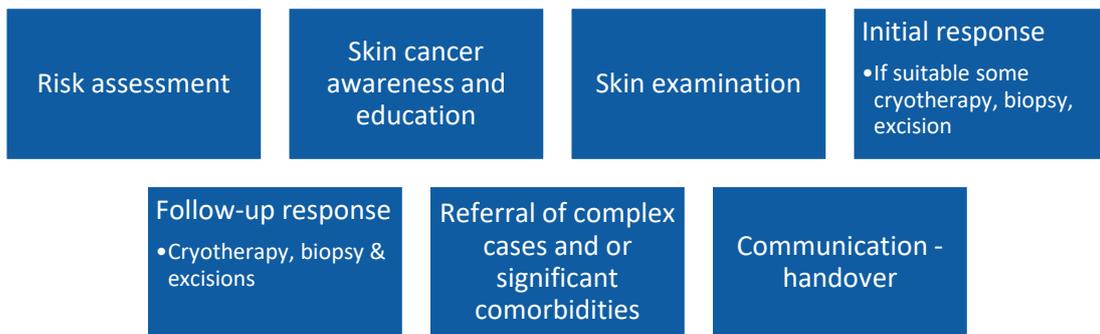


Figure 3: Core elements of early detection service

## CheckUP

CheckUP is an independent not-for-profit organisation dedicated to a vision of ‘better health for people and communities who need it most.’ CheckUP has experience commissioning primary health services across Queensland using Australian Government funding sources. CheckUP can use its existing commissioning framework to plan and implement skin cancer early detection services.

## Achievements to date

To 31 August 2023 CheckUP has delivered:

- comprehensive **needs assessment**; including desktop service mapping, stakeholder engagement, and data analysis.
- stakeholder **engagement** including mapping service need in communities throughout Queensland and identifying regional health needs and priorities.

- Establishment of an **Advisory Committee**. The role of the Advisory Committee is to review key project planning documents, provide advice to inform project delivery, monitor project progress and outcomes, manage risks and advocate for the project.
- All have informed the commissioning of providers to deliver outreach services in the five priority HHS regions.



## Services delivered



Skin Patrol and Clements Medical delivered a total of four outreach services over May and June 2023. During this time seventy-six patients had an appointment, thirty of those had cancers detected and one person had a melanoma detected.

# Element 3 – Community activation and health promotion

This element supports practical changes such as sun-safe policies and creation of more shade so that it is easier for Queenslanders to be sun safe. Community activation is part of the overall project because community organisations and groups can:

- influence social and physical environments,
- develop and apply local solutions and
- develop and support sun safe policy.

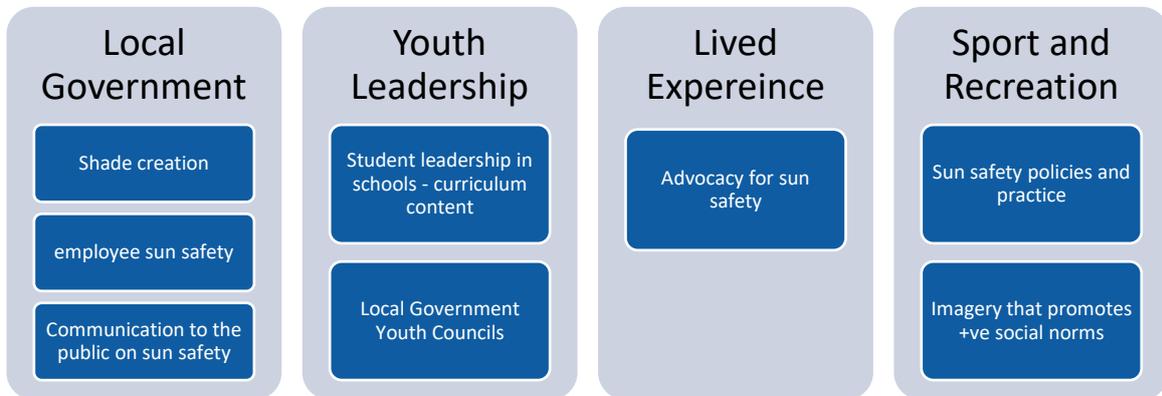


Figure 4 Priorities for community activation and health promotion

## Achievements to date

Recruitment of a health promotion officer by Central Queensland HHS to improve equity and activate community strengths for sun safety in the Central Queensland Region. The position was filled in June 2023, is based in Rockhampton, and has established “Sun Safe CQ” as well as working closely with the overall project team under the guidance of the Steering Committee.

### Local Government

- Scoping of the Local Government role in skin cancer prevention which includes planning and delivery of shade, an often-large outdoor workforce and community messaging about sun safety. There are 29 local governments across the 5 priority HHS regions.
- Initial meetings have been held with 11 local governments to discuss sun safety.
- Completed a systematic review of sun safety and shade information on the 29 local government websites.



- The web review demonstrated that local governments invest in three key areas: employee sun safety, public communication about sun safety and shade, planning and creation.

### Youth Leadership

- Curriculum aligned teaching resources that encourage student leadership were identified (Sun and UV at school teaching resources). These materials have been shared with the Queensland Education Department and they have committed to promote the materials to Queensland teachers.

### Lived Experience

- A lived experience project group was established in Central Queensland in July 2023. Working alongside people with of skin cancer is important to ensure a person-centred approach and because the messenger is as important as the message.



### Sport and Recreation

- Portable shade structures were distributed to fifty peak sporting bodies. This was planned and delivered in collaboration with the Department of Tourism, Innovation and Sport,
- Sponsored the Queensland Touch Football Junior State Cup 3-day event in Rockhampton in July 2023 which attracted 10,000 daily attendees. Six shade marquees were provided for the event along with hats and sunscreen for players. The event was supported by the Rockhampton health promotion officer.



## Planned

- Link Local Governments with new tools to maximize the effectiveness of tree planting for shade.
- Work with Local Governments that have youth councils to plan and execute sun safe youth events
- Investigate with Beef Australia how to make Beef Week 2024 a sun safe event.

# Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

## Co-design led by University of Queensland

The University of Queensland were contracted to lead a co-design process to develop a monitoring and evaluation framework. Workshops were held in June 2023 and engaged over 30 people (some people contributed more than once). In addition to stakeholders previously identified, people who engaged in the workshops included those with lived experience of melanoma and carers, hospital and health service representatives, primary health network representatives, GPs, academics, dermatologists, people with marketing expertise, epidemiologists, and public health experts.



Figure 5 Co-design opportunities and number of people who attend each.

## Draft Monitoring and Evaluation Framework

A draft monitoring and evaluation framework was shared with the project Steering Committee and is currently being finalised. The framework will inform data collection and reporting over the remaining 3 years.

### Long-term Outcomes to assess

- Sustained increase in use of the five sun safe behaviours
- Sustained reduction in sunburn rates
- More equitable access across Qld to quality skin cancer detection services
- Increased awareness and skills for self-skin checks
- Increased community leadership for sun safety policy and shade creation

### Critical evaluation questions

- What were the main unintended effects (positive and negative) of the project?
- Did the project lead to differential results across groups (equity)?

# Conclusion

At the end of year one the Skin Cancer Prevention and Early Detection Project has harnessed the expertise of skin cancer prevention experts and key stakeholders to establish evidence informed, multi-strategy response to skin cancer prevention and early detection.

The next year will see new campaigns and sponsorships, new skin cancer early detection services and new local partnerships with local governments and youth. The monitoring and evaluation framework establishes a clear path to assess the impact of this coordinated response to skin cancer in Queensland.

## Contact for more information

If you require further information about this project, please contact Mark West, Executive Director, Prevention Strategy Branch in Queensland Health. [psb\\_policy@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:psb_policy@health.qld.gov.au)

# Appendix 1 – Steering Committee Membership

Organisation	Representative
Prevention Strategy Branch, Department of Health	Mark West <b>(Chair)</b>
Strategic Communication Branch, Department of Health	Tracey Walker
Central Queensland Public Health Unit	Dr Gulam Khandaker
Queensland Cancer Clinical Network	Dr Anjili Sahai
QIMR Berghofer	Prof David Whiteman
Cancer Council Queensland	Sharyn Chin-Fat
Skin Cancer Prevention Queensland	Prof Rachel Neale
Skin Cancer Prevention Queensland	Prof Monika Janda
Royal Australian College of General Practitioners - Dermatology Special Interest Group	Dr Jeremy Hudson
Dermatology Research Centre at University of Queensland	Professor Peter Soyer
Melanoma Patients Australia	Victoria Beedle