

**Subject:**

FW: The Statewide BaSCI Project Update May 2022



## Message from the Chair

After an incredible start to 2022, it is great to be writing to you again now to give you an update about progress with the project. Our last Statewide BaSCI Project Update was ahead of the New Year break and as we reflected on the challenges of the past year we also celebrated some significant achievements within the project. The months that have followed have seen Queensland deal with the overwhelming impacts of Covid-19 as well as significant flooding. As a community of practicing clinicians and operational staff we have responded to the needs of patients and maintained direct care while juggling the demands of this complex and important project. Our progress has been slower than planned due to the recent debilitating effects to workforce and rehabilitation services across Queensland but the Statewide BaSCI Project has continued to embrace the opportunity to adapt and improve.

Our Working Groups continue to make progress both on documenting standardised access pathways to specialist SCI and ABI rehabilitation across the continuum and developing key metrics to support better transparency about the performance of our service networks. As this work unfolds we will continue our data driven conversations to inform our project priorities and support change.

We now have three sites with Project Officers well and truly onboard. Dr Michele Grant at Sunshine Coast, Leah Vegh and Beth Cunningham at Metro North and Donna Harre and Glenn Verner-Wren at Metro South have been meeting regularly to support implementation of their local service initiatives and to better

understand the shared issues and concerns of patients and service providers across these areas. The dedication and enthusiasm of these staff is building momentum for change and strengthening partnerships through collaboration and information sharing.

All sites have their Clinical Lead appointments in place. It is invaluable to meet with Dr Paul Chapman (Townsville), Dr Neala Milburn (Sunshine Coast), Dr Cassandra McLennan (Metro North), Dr Leah Goodwin and Dr Claire Panagoda (Metro South), and Dr Ben Chen (Gold Coast) at the (virtual) table as key leaders to unpack some complex service issues.

Your local teams are key to the success of this project and I continue to encourage you to connect with the work at your Hospital and Health Service. Notwithstanding the potholes in the road this year some local initiatives have managed to be established and in this update we celebrate the progress and these achievements. Well done to all involved and as we move forward I look forward to sharing more good news stories with you.

**Prof. Tim Geraghty**

Statewide BaSCI Project Clinical Lead



**Sunshine Coast starts seeing patients**

In the face of many hurdles, including limits to all non-urgent care early in the year due to COVID, the Sunshine Coast Hospital and Health Service (SCHHS) commenced three BaSCI clinics at the Sunshine Coast University Hospital in March this year. A Complex Concussion service is addressing unmet need for people with mild traumatic brain injury who experience persistent symptoms beyond two weeks. Previously there have been limited options for specialist follow-up care of this cohort of patients on the Sunshine Coast. This clinic provides assessment and brief intervention with the aim of restoring independence and pre-injury function, including facilitating a return to work and driving. An expanded Hypertonicity assessment and injection clinic has increased the capacity of patients able to be seen and reduced the waiting times for both brain and spine injured patients accessing this service. The clinic is linking with SCHHS' Community Rehabilitation Team and NDIS services for follow-up treatment, and a business case has been developed to ensure the sustainability of this initiative. Finally, pictured here is the first patient of the Neurointensive Day Rehabilitation Service. This multidisciplinary team is seeing up to eight patients daily four days a week in an intensive ambulatory model that is aiming to reduce inpatient length of stay on acute and rehabilitation wards and to prevent new hospital admissions by allowing people in the community who are at high risk of admission to access intensive rehabilitation.



## STARS BIRU Opens

A lot has changed at Metro North since the Statewide Plan for acquired brain injury rehabilitation was authored in 2016. The opening of the STARS (Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service) facility and the Brighton Brain Injury Service (BBIS) have created much change in the local landscape. This month, under BaSCI, STARS has uplifted 8 beds to pilot a specialist brain injury rehabilitation unit north of the river. The move is an important step for people with moderate and severe ABI for whom timely admission to the Princess Alexandra BIRU can be a challenge due to existing bed numbers. The pilot will continue to strengthen the relationships between services in the metropolitan area by better defining, coordinating and facilitating appropriate pathways for care based on the clinical need of each patient and the appropriate related service capability. Pictured above is Kathy Goodchild (Advanced BIRU Occupational Therapist) working with a patient in the STARS gym. Reflecting on the project she said, "It is an exciting and rewarding time for clinicians being a part of the start-up of a new service. From a clinical perspective, it is great to be able to provide brain-injury specific rehab for patients that live within metro-north."



## Community Care in Partnership

Access to community rehabilitation for people close to home after a brain injury is shown to benefit recovery. Investing in improvement at this point of the care continuum by building capacity and capability for specialist community-based ABI rehabilitation services across Queensland has been prioritised in the Statewide Plan and reiterated in the previous ABI-SCI Connect project. Metro South has developed and operates the Acquired Brain Injury Transitional Rehabilitation Service (ABI-TRS) and the Acquired Brain Injury Outreach Service (ABIOS) as integrated community-based components of their current Brain Injury Rehabilitation Services (BIRS) continuum. However, service demand routinely exceeds capacity with extended wait times for ABIOS in particular, and there is a need for further service development in this area. To address this, Karen Goddard, Clare Morgan and Mandy Nielson (absent from image) are working to design a hybrid model for specialist ABI community rehabilitation at hub sites, and partnering with Metro North Community-Based Rehabilitation Team to increase local capacity and embed improved processes for people from this area to access timely specialist community rehabilitation services. This collaborative approach is a step to

improving service access equity and the impacts and outcomes from the cross river project will help inform a model to potentially be scaled to other areas

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## Supporting Spinal Cord Injury Care

The Queensland Spinal Cord Injury Service (QSCIS) is the statewide provider of specialist, lifelong, spinal care services. The service encompasses the Spinal Injuries Unit (SIU), Transitional Rehabilitation Program (TRP) and the Spinal Outreach Service (SPOT). Based at Metro South HHS the team of dedicated staff work right across the continuum of care supporting people after spinal injuries with ongoing and adapting service responsiveness. QSCIS has identified an opportunity to redefine their referral and intake processes under BaSCI to ensure there is no wrong door for people with a spinal cord injury, and their care providers, to navigate to and access the highly specialised expertise of this team. In designing this process the opportunity to support patients waiting for a bed in the SIU has been prioritised. QSCIS are now standing up an in-reach model of clinical support to provide information and consultation to staff in other facilities across Queensland caring for patients with spinal cord injury. Due to the relatively low incidence of spinal cord injuries, clinicians outside of the specialist unit may not have recent experience managing these patients and their particular specialist care requirements. The clinical support service will provide expertise to the teams caring for patients when they are referred and while they wait. This aims to reduce risk by providing the required discipline specific clinical information to the staff caring for these patients often in acute or general rehabilitation wards across Queensland. The QSCIS team will also design a suite of information to support clinicians ensuring access to consistent evidence based resources on specialist spinal care for people with spinal cord injury.

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## Statewide Working Group Update

Great progress has been made with the Statewide BaSCI working group. Many thanks to all the active input to these groups at time when availability for project work is limited with your clinical loads.

The *Data and KPIs Working Group* has endorsed 'Set 1' for collection commencing July 1 2022.

The 4 initial KPIs are related to:

1. Referrals received and referrals accepted
2. Waiting time to service provision
3. Patient reported experience measure (PREM)
4. Distance travelled to service by patient

Collection of this information will support data driven conversations in the project and we are excited to see what is presented in the initial snap shots.

The *SCI Pathways Working Group* has made great progress since the initiation of the MSHHS local project mentioned above by detailing navigation to the specialist service and offering essential clinical support. This work is a key dependency to agreeing on a standardised pathway for access right across the state and will become a platform for the working group.

The *ABI Pathways Working Group* is drafting a pathway for mild traumatic brain injury and is linking with the HealthPathways program of work to enable statewide reach and engagement with primary care for consistent assessment, management and access to specialist support where required. The group is also starting to unpack an agreed pathway for moderate/severe brain injury where admitted patients move through the system and appropriate settings of care across the continuum dependent on their clinical needs and complexity.

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## Coming up

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## Annual Project Forum

We are planning and looking forward to our second project forum in late June. We are aiming for a face to face event in Brisbane where we can share projects details from implementation sites, learn from other areas of good practice and keep developing partnerships for the benefit patients and the Statewide BaSCI Project Collaborative.

## Join the Collaborative

If you are not receiving this email directly and would like to connect with the project please email [BaSCI@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:BaSCI@health.qld.gov.au) to join the Implementation Collaborative and subscribe to the newsletter. You can also engage directly with your colleagues and peers in the [TEAMS](#) we have established for the group.

### Clinical Excellence Queensland

a division of Queensland Health  
Queensland Government  
15 Butterfield Street Herston Qld 4006

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