

2020-2023

STRATEGIC Plan



**Carbal
Medical
Services**

November 2021 Revision

Carbal Medical Services Strategic Plan

In 2008 there was an acknowledgement by all levels of government that improving the opportunities and health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be a national priority.

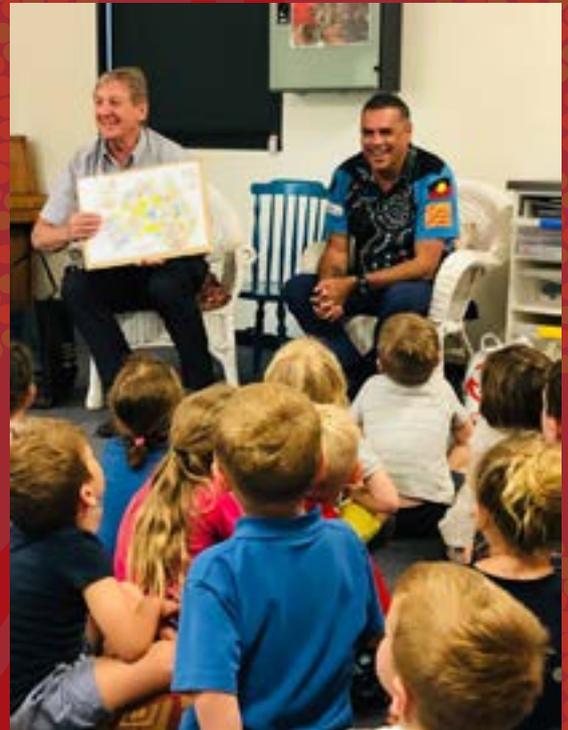
The Closing the Gap initiative builds on a foundation of respect and unity to deliver outcomes that are a normal expectation for non-indigenous Australians.

The poorer health of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples when compared to the non-Indigenous population is no secret – and something can be done about it.

Something can be done to achieve health and life expectation equality for Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.... Aboriginal Medical Services like Carbal exist so that in partnership with Commonwealth and State governments, we can deliver the necessary services to do that something.

By combining all our efforts we can ensure that all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children born in this country have the same opportunity as other Australian children to live a long, healthy and happy life.

This Strategic Plan has been developed to provide an overview of our aims and operations and to act as a guide in assessing our progress towards the achievement of intended outcomes.



Brian Hewitt (CEO)

VISION STATEMENT

To make a significant and growing contribution towards achieving equity in health outcomes for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities of Toowoomba and our wider service region.

GOAL STATEMENT

To provide a high quality, sustainable, culturally appropriate and holistic primary health care service.

OUR CORE VALUES

- ✓ **Delivery of client responsive health services.**
- ✓ **Provision of holistic, culturally appropriate health services.**
- ✓ **Strong cultural connection with individual families and the broader community.**
- ✓ **Commitment to continuous improvement in quality service delivery.**
- ✓ **Modeling of responsible and representative governance.**



**Modelling of
responsible and
representative
governance**

**Commitment to
continual and quality
improvement in
service delivery.**

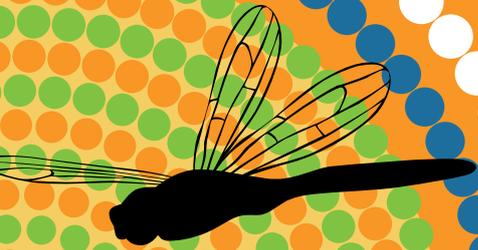
**Cultural connection
with families and
the broader
community.**

OUR CORE VALUES

Delivery of tailored health services

Provision of holistic, culturally appropriate health services.

Support for the social and emotional wellbeings of the individuals in our community.



Our History

Carbal Medical Services was created in response to a growing need for a local indigenous, community - controlled health service for Toowoomba.

In 2003 the Toowoomba indigenous communities formed Darling Downs Shared Care Inc. and successfully tendered to the Commonwealth Government to provide culturally sensitive and appropriate health services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities of the Toowoomba Region.

In November 2015, after many years of success and operational expansion, the members of Downs Shared Care Inc. voted unanimously to proceed with a process that supported the future sustainability of Carbal Medical Services by agreeing to proceed with the formal requirements for a migration from an Incorporated Association to a Company Limited by Guarantee.

Carbal Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Services Limited, trading as Carbal Medical Services adopted a new Constitution and initiated changes to the legal, financial and operational structures in place at Carbal so that we remain fully transparent and accountable to our community and to the State and Commonwealth funding bodies for the health services and programs that we deliver.





Since 2015, Carbal has successfully maintained organization wide ISO 9001:2015 accreditation through an intensive and ongoing dedication to ensure that our policies and processes are supporting the delivery of quality services to our community.

The Action Plan and the Quality Control Manual are regularly reviewed and updated. These documents are important in that they provide a clear direction for determining activity within the Carbal charter of operations and also clear guidelines for reviewing and maintaining acceptable processes for remaining compliant and accountable across the many areas that apply to the delivery of health services.

In May 2019 Carbal relocated all Toowoomba clinical, program and administration services to a new multi-storey facility located in Russell Street Toowoomba. In 2019 Carbal successfully registered the Carbal Institute for Aboriginal Health Research and commenced operations with a number of partners.

In late 2019 Carbal successfully purchased a new facility from which ITC services will operate after mid 2020. The Carbal Vaccination Centre which provides COVID19 vaccinations and tests under contract to the Commonwealth Government also operates from this facility.

Carbal provides an extremely important connection between Indigenous communities and access to culturally appropriate health services. It is the aim of the Board of Directors to maintain effective and thoughtful management in ensuring that services are able to expand in response to the identified needs of our clients.



Our Scope

THE AIM OF THE COMPANY IS TO PURSUE THE FOLLOWING PURPOSES:

- a. To develop, coordinate and conduct services that provide for the care and support required to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and groups in Toowoomba and our wider service region;
- b. to coordinate and conduct services aimed at improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Toowoomba and our wider service region;
- c. to collaborate with and support research professionals or entities in the development and implementation of translational research that will improve the health and well-being outcomes within Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Carbal currently delivers a number of funded health programs on behalf of State and Commonwealth governments and the DDWMPHN. Carbal also maintains two fully operational general practice clinics in Toowoomba and Warwick. Carbal has commenced NDIS services in Toowoomba and Warwick and now offers Coordination and Support services to over 100 community members. In addition to the broad spectrum of programs that we are involved with, Carbal hosts a number of Allied Health professionals and research teams from the University of Qld and the Qld University of Technology to assist with the collection of data related to preventative health measures in the fields of physical and mental health.

The Carbal Board of Directors is steadfastly supportive of broadening the charter of operations to include support for activities and programs that may fall outside of specific funding guidelines, but which have been identified as areas of need in relation to the provision of health services for our indigenous communities. Our success in maintaining significant self-generated funds has allowed Carbal to 'walk the talk' when it comes to providing programs and services that have real outcomes when measured against the need to provide culturally-sensitive health and social services to the Indigenous communities of the Darling Downs region. Carbal will continue to identify gaps and attempt to address these gaps in a practical and sustainable way.

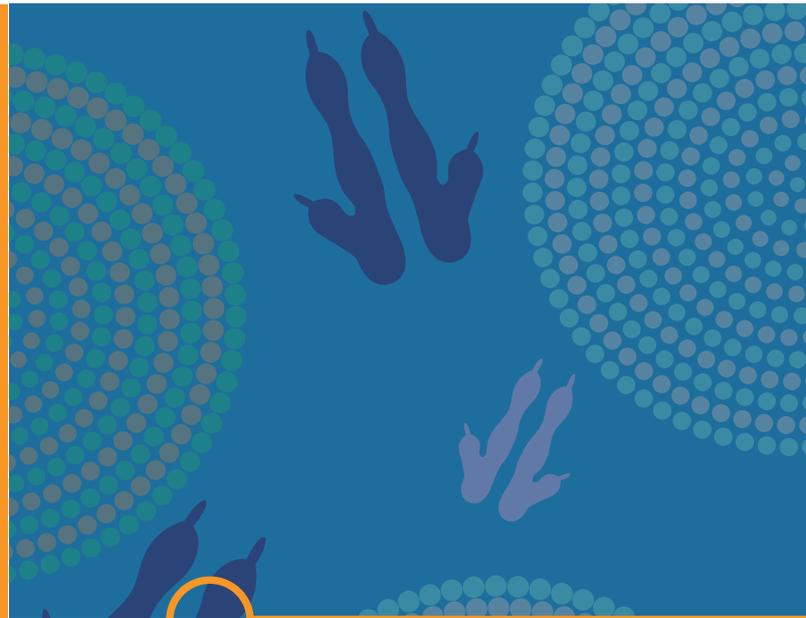


Current Membership

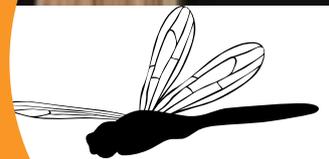
MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMPANY MUST BE MAINTAINED AT A MINIMUM OF SEVEN (7) MEMBERS IN TOTAL,

- a. Members who live, work or otherwise represent the operational region for Carbal activities. ('representation' to be determined by the Directors, in their sole discretion);
- b. Members who formally identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander (minimum 90% of total membership); and
- c. Members who do not formally identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander but have been accepted by the Directors as meeting the following requirements: (maximum of 10% of total membership).
 - iv. wish to become a Member;
 - v. support the purposes, operations and best interests of the Company, and
 - vi. agree to comply with this Constitution; including paying the guarantee if required.

The Company must have at least five (5), but no more than seven (7) Directors at any one time. At least fifty per cent (50%) of the Directors must identify as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander.

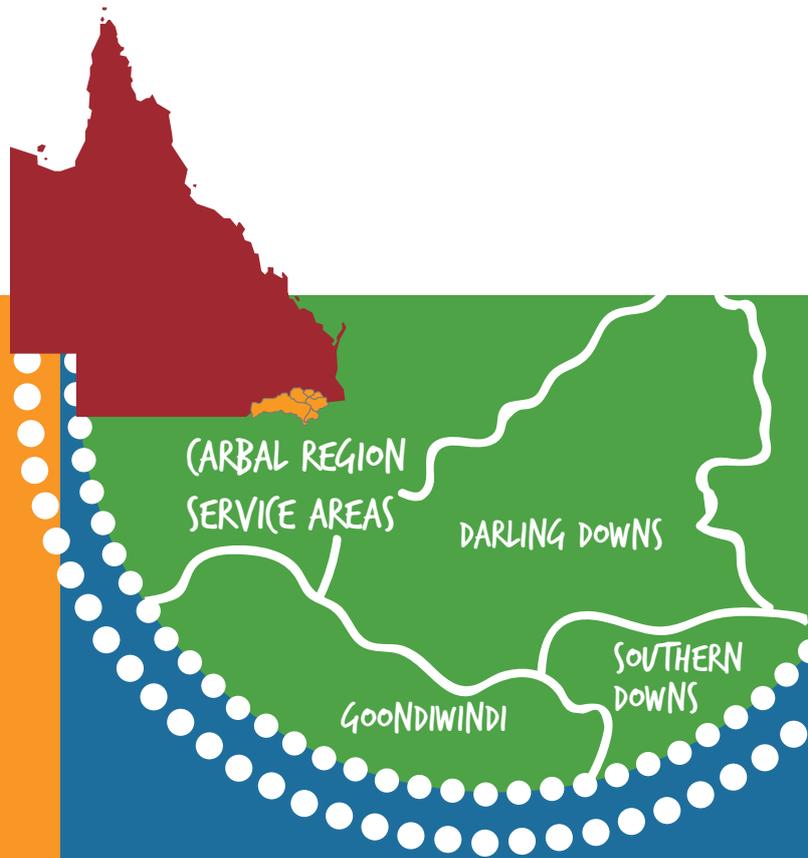


Maree Toombs (Chairperson)



Strategic Priorities

1. To provide health and support services that eliminate disparity in health outcomes.
2. To influence reform and create new service models for the sustainable delivery of health services to all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.
3. To maintain involvement in a range of innovative partnerships and service models with hospitals, private providers and other Indigenous health organisations.
4. To participate in a regional model for Primary Health Care delivery to the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in Toowoomba and the South West Downs by working collaboratively with like-minded organisations.
5. To provide significant input into the key health risk factors of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and expand our services in response to evidence- based community health needs.



Carbal's service region comprises of the three local government areas of Goondiwindi Regional Council, Southern Downs Regional Council and Toowoomba Regional Council. Carbal's region has a total area of 39,384.0km²

Based on 2016 figures, 13,228 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people live in Carbal's region. This represents 5% of the total resident population.



Key Actions

ACTION ONE: TRANSITION FROM ASSOCIATION TO COMPANY

- ✔ Ensure community, board members and staff are informed regarding any company structural changes.
- ✔ Investigate whether changing the company regulator from ASIC to ORIC is required or advantageous. **Completed – ASIC preferred**
- ✔ Ensure all services provided by the company remain in the best interests of the Indigenous community and demonstrate value for funding bodies.
- ✔ Ensure that all regulator (ASIC, ACNC, AHPRA) requirements are maintained. **Maintained and reported 2021**
- ✔ Review Secretary to Board role and position. **Completed – new Secretary appointed**
- ✔ A register of Board Member Interests and Related Parties to be established.

ACTION TWO: MAINTAIN A SOUND AND VIABLE FINANCIAL POSITION

- ✔ Continue to maximise the funding that Carbal is able to direct towards improving Indigenous health outcomes.
- ✔ Continue to investigate suitable infrastructure for Warwick operations. **Ongoing**
- ✔ Investigate the purchase or construction of an NDIS and ITC centre in Toowoomba to accommodate for expansion. **Completed**
- ✔ Maintain ISO9001:2015 accreditation procedures to ensure transparent and responsible financial management. **Up-To-Date accreditation**
- ✔ Review financial management and personnel structure. Recommend and implement required changes. **New Reporting Hierarchy published 2021**
- ✔ Investigate opportunities for expansion of NDIS services:
 - In new regions **Paper to be submitted 2022**
 - Provision of supported independent living services **Paper to be submitted 2022**

ACTION THREE: MAINTAIN AN ACCURATE HEALTH PROFILE AND UTILISE DATA TO IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES

- ✔ In line with Carbal's Continual Quality Improvement plan, continue to conduct data checks and improvement processes to ensure that data is as accurate as possible; **Quarterly report to Board**
- ✔ Investigate and implement an outcomes-based evaluation process for non-health programs to improve the quality of associated reports to funding bodies. **Completed – MMEX installed**
- ✔ Investigate and continue to offer opportunities for Carbal staff to attain further credentials and knowledge related to their areas of employment.
- ✔ Continue to educate all staff on how to accurately enter data and the importance of up-to-date data, especially in relation to nKPI and NDIS.
- ✔ Regularly review clinical data with all clinical staff to identify progress and priorities.
- ✔ Review and implement clinical processes to address identified health priorities.
- ✔ Identify emerging health and social issues, areas of need and potential new services to meet those needs. **Food Bank commenced 2020**

ACTION FOUR: CLIENT AND COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND PARTICIPATION

- ✔ Continue to identify trends and the needs of community through organisational feedback mechanisms.
- ✔ Source feedback through regular contact with stakeholders and community members.
- ✔ Review of COA application policy and processes. **Completed 2020**
- ✔ Utilise self-generated earnings wherever possible and reasonable to address emerging community priorities. **Counsellor/ Hearing Health.**

Key Actions

ACTION FIVE:

EXPAND SERVICE REACH TO ADDRESS NEEDS

- ✔ Utilise a range of Aboriginal Health Workers, Medical, Nursing and Allied Health Staff to provide services that address identified population health needs in a culturally appropriate way.
- ✔ Continue to investigate solutions to priority needs.
- ✔ Maintain and expand provision of diverse Allied Health professionals. **Funded Project commenced Toowoomba & Warwick 2020**
- ✔ Maintain and expand provision of Mental Health services.
- ✔ Maintain and expand provision of specific need family support services.
- ✔ Continue to review and address Hearing Health requirements within the school system. **Expanded**
- ✔ Investigate opportunities to provide health, social services and education to Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander people who are engaged with other services:
 - Correctional Facilities
 - Government agencies
 - NGOs and social support networks
- ✔ Investigate potential to apply AMS model to the provision of targeted multicultural health services within catchment area:
Established clinic and program
- ✔ Develop relationships and infrastructure to implement an essential food provision service for families in need:
Food Bank program established
- ✔ Ensure all care is evidence-based and sustainable.

ACTION SIX:

ESTABLISH AND MAINTAIN EFFECTIVE WORKING PARTNERSHIPS

- ✔ Link with primary, secondary and tertiary sectors to increase access to appropriate and timely care. **24 Staff Scholarships secured**
- ✔ Seek to improve referral pathways to enable continuity of care.
- ✔ Utilise telehealth services where possible.
- ✔ Explore targeted outreach services delivered by Carbal in partnership with DDHHS.
- ✔ Continue to develop the partnership with DDHHS to explore a mechanism for AMS referral of services by the health service instead of in-house delivery:
Ante-natal classes jointly delivered.
 - Explore outreach transport services in partnership with DDHHS.
- ✔ Collaborate on relevant programs to ensure a whole of population approach.
- ✔ Maintain membership NACCHO and QAIHC as pivotal peak bodies and support initiatives as they arise.

ACTION SEVEN:

MAINTAIN ACCREDITATION STATUS

- ✔ Ensure that operational accreditation: ACNC, GPA, NDIS Commission, ISO 9001:2015 is maintained, regularly reviewed and amended as per requirements.
- ✔ Develop internal checks and balances, training and policy development to ensure that accreditation processes provide opportunities for continuous quality improvement.

ACTION EIGHT:

EXPAND TO INCLUDE A RESEARCH AND PHILANTHROPIC ARM

- ✔ Investigate required processes and establish a Research institute as an entity of Carbal Medical Services. **Sub-entity created**
- ✔ Investigate required processes for obtaining priority identified research grants that will enhance the delivery of health services to the community. **Not applicable**
- ✔ Continue to investigate and form partnerships with other research organisations to implement research initiatives. **Ongoing**
- ✔ Actively seek opportunities for organisations and individuals to partner with Carbal Medical Services in a philanthropic approach to the improvements of health and social services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.
- ✔ Develop a mechanism for acknowledgment of philanthropic partners. **Ongoing**
- ✔ Continue to review and expand opportunities to deliver cultural awareness training to external organisations and professional bodies. **Greatly expanded**

The Art of Carbal:

'Emu Hunt' by Uncle Colin Jones

"This one is showing the Emu hunt and of course you have the circles, the life force of the land so it's in a drier part of Australia with the colours of the red ochre and the browns.

And you can see the warriors there with their spears tracking the Emu. Now Emus are quite unique because the female lays the eggs and the male sits on the eggs and hatches the eggs. So when you're hunting and you see an Emu with little chicks you know it's always the male so you don't spear the male you go and hunt the female because the male is going to bring up the next generation of and look after them.

Emus are very inquisitive, you can't chase after an Emu, you'd never catch it. Now because they're inquisitive, our people understood the environment, understood all of nature and understood all the animals – so they played along with that structure of what their weaknesses were.

So with the Emu, if a group of warriors come up and they see a group of Emus, the first thing they'll do is make sign language, everybody drops down behind the little bushes and so forth,

then one warrior will tie some branches on his back with a vine and he'll get his throwing stick which is like a hook boomerang and he'll put it up high above his head and then he'll bend over and make the sound of the Emu, "oonm, oonm, oonm". And the Emu gets interested and it turns around and it looks and then he'll drop down and move back a little bit further and come up again and move the hook boomerang around and make the sound and move round like the Emu. All the time he's enticing the Emus to follow him.

Meanwhile the other warriors behind the little bushers are hiding with their spears and their nulla nullas and so forth and so as the Emus come in closer they've got a better chance of catching the Emu and spearing it without running after it, wasting energy and time and that's why we know the Emu is very inquisitive and we only hunt the female not the male because males got the young chicks."

- Uncle Colin Jones





The Art of Carbal:

'From the Red Centre, to the Rainforest, to the Sea' by Uncle Colin Jones

"What you have here, the painting depicts the inland of Australia, we call the 'Red Centre' on the left and then you come through to the Rainforest, then you come through to the sea. So the three are the Red Centre, the Rainforest and the Sea.

In the desert area of course you have the ochre colours that depict the colours of the earth and the salt pans going through or the dry creek beds. Then you have three women sitting around a camp fire with the digging sticks and the coolamons, the wooden bowls full of their bush tucker they've been collecting.

You'll notice up in the top in the middle of the Red Centre, you have five kangaroos camouflaged in their environment. Now if anyone's been out to Alice Springs, Uluru around that area of a night time you look up and the stars are so bright you feel like you can reach up and touch them. Now the stars played an important part for our people especially in Central Australia because they were used for navigation like other cultures around the world – the Polynesians, Melanesians, they navigated by the stars over the ocean, our people navigated by the stars over the Red Centre in to the desert areas. We knew where they rose, where they set and the direction they were going, so we used the always. Now at the bottom on the left hand side of the Red Centre you've got the two little hands, and hands are depicting a signature that we belong to this land, not ownership of it but belonging to it – it was a different cultural structure.

Now you move from the Red Centre and you go to the right, you're moving in to the rainforest area, and in the rainforest area you'll notice that the footprints continue on from the Red Centre from one campsite to the next campsite then following the campsite to protect the earth not to destroy it so we only stayed there for a short period of time and then when things

were starting to go down, we moved to another area to let the land regenerate with the food source - the animals and the plants. So that's the camp sites and the foot prints which we call 'Song Lines'. In the rainforest, you'll see camouflaged, is the tree python. He lives in the trees, very quiet but watches what's going on and so [there is] wisdom and knowledge from the rainforest python and you can see he's camouflaged there.

Then as you come across, you got the colours of the sand that's denoting it's on the beach and you see the life force of the sand. And you know it's on the beach, it's not on the river because when you look in to the water, what do you have? Sea Turtles. Sea Turtles have flippers unlike fresh water turtles which have webbed feet with claws so these are sea turtles. Now Sea Turtles, they're important to our people because every three years they come back to the beaches and the female lays her eggs and we collect those eggs, we never take the whole lot, we only take what we need but leave so many there to regenerate and regrow. Interestingly, the male sea turtles never come back to land; it's the females that venture back to lay their eggs. What do sea turtles eat? One of their main foods is Jelly fish so you'll see up the top near the sand areas, the Jelly fish camouflaged that the sea turtles eat. Then you have the life force of the water and the turtles swimming to lay their eggs.

So it's telling a whole story of the Red Centre, Rainforest and to the ocean, how our people respected the land and knew the land intimately."

- Uncle Colin Jones

The Art of Carbal:

'Carbal the Carpet Snake' by Uncle Colin Jones

"In some of the dreaming stories about the Carpet Snake, it will be referred to as the Rainbow Serpent.

Here, if you look at this painting, all camouflaged, the colours of the earth once again, the circles of life force and you can see the warriors walking along and they got there spears, they got there woomeras and one is carrying his boomerang and they're tracking and going through the land. You can also see (bottom left) the women following the men and the women with the little children and the men there offering protection with their spears and their woomeras, and the women carrying the coolamons on their heads and their dilly bags. So they're moving around the land and showing how we protect the land as we move around. Once again, we have four women with their digging sticks and coolamons sitting around the camp fire preparing the food they've collected.

You can see the camouflaged hand signs; these are some of my children, my daughter Tricia and my grandson, Jordan from when he was little. So this is telling the story of the Carpet Snake, Carbal the Carpet Snake or Goorialla came into the land and as it slid along through the land it pushed up the earth to make the mountain ranges and the dark dots are the cliffs and the hills going up and it made the deep valleys for the water to run.

So when you fly over Australia in a plane and look down, all our waterways look like Carbal or Goorialla the Rainbow Serpent slid along and created our river system in the dreaming."

- Uncle Colin Jones





carbal.com.au