

far north queensland hospital foundation

WINTER 2026



\$1.1 million in one night!

In just one night, more than \$1.1 million was raised by the FNQ community to bring life-saving new services to Cairns Hospital patients.

A crowd of 128 guests at the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation's annual donor dinner at the Cairns Showgrounds in late June, raised the incredible sum towards establishing an ECMO (Extracorporeal Membrane Oxygenation) service at Cairns Hospital's Intensive Care Unit.

ECMO is one of the most advanced forms of life support, used when a patient's heart and lungs can no longer function on their own, providing critical time for recovery in some of the most serious medical emergencies.

While that was the original aim, guests were so philanthropic towards the ECMO that the \$800,000 goal was exceeded, meaning with donor approval, additional funds will be put towards an orthopaedic surgery imaging system.

Foundation CEO Gina Hogan said the result demonstrated the extraordinary impact a community could have when it comes together behind a shared vision for healthcare.

"We were overwhelmed by the generosity shown on the night. It is a privilege for the Foundation to bring together our philanthropic community, who all share the same goal of improving healthcare for people across Far North Queensland," Mrs Hogan said.

"The impact of one is meaningful. The impact of many is transformational. Because of this support, we can now establish an ECMO stabilisation service in Cairns, helping critically unwell patients access life-saving treatment sooner."

Currently, patients who require ECMO rely on a specialist retrieval team which must travel from Brisbane to initiate treatment, a process that can take up to 12 hours. With this equipment and training available locally, patients will be able to be placed on ECMO within hours.

"In a critical situation, minutes and hours can make all the difference. That is why this support from our community is so important, and why the impact of this generosity will be felt by patients and families across our region for many years to come," Mrs Hogan said.

Guests at the dinner heard about the impact this service could have locally, with funds raised on the night meaning the equipment and training can be ordered.

Attendees also heard from Cairns local Brett Goldban, often labelled a miracle man, after he was repatriated from Japan to the Prince Charles Hospital in an extremely critical condition. During his high-risk health incident there were many occasions that his life hung in the balance, but with the input of hundreds of clinicians and even airport staff, he lived to tell the tale.

The Foundation sourced a demo model of the ECMO equipment so attendees could visualise how the equipment might be used in real life.

"We were lucky that we work closely with the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service on a list of equipment that we can fundraise towards. The fact we were able to finalise the ECMO fundraising so quickly meant we could start fundraising for the next equipment – an orthopaedic surgery imaging system that can be used initially on spinal patients while they are undergoing surgery," Mrs Hogan said.

"It means when surgeons are placing nails and screws during a procedure, they can check the placement, right there in the theatre, without having to take them (still anaesthetised) down to Medical Imaging to check," she said.

"Our community is incredibly lucky that we have such forward-thinking clinicians and executives who are so passionate about bringing the best services and equipment to our region. It's a privilege to support them in achieving their goals for patient outcomes."

Mrs Hogan said the night reflected the region's strong commitment to better healthcare outcomes.

"This event reflects what is so powerful about our region – people coming together to make a tangible difference for others," she said.



Megan and Malcolm McKay



Gina Hogan



Dean Pradal and Tony Nastasi



Jodi Peters



Dan Kasatchenko, Emily Chapman, Dr Ken Chapman, Karen, Margo and George Chapman.



Brett Goldban



Sharon and Mark Dodge



Stefan Antoniou and Aza Mohammad



Leann and Lloyd Everist



Jim and Jo Wallace



The Marias



Richard and Liz Barker, Sarah and James Mort



Marie and Gary Taifalos, Sharon Dawson, Phillip Mangano, Melinda and Nick Loukas



Nick Holloway



Finn Slade, Dan Kasatchenko, Royce Slade



Melinda and Nick Loukas, Marie and Gary Taifalos, Mo Rowbottom



Leann Everist and Gina Hogan



Steven and Ashleigh Umback



Sandra Rato



Denise and Ellis Richardson



Danae Jones and Gina Hogan



Mary-ann and Sandy McEachan



Foundation team: Robyn Rankin, Tahlia Markcrow, Michael Hooper, Kellie Wilson, Gina Hogan, Sharni Whittaker, Jenny Coates, Glenys Duncombe.



Cancer Care Hub delivered

Far North Queenslanders now have access to enhanced cancer care closer to home, thanks to a partnership between the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation, its generous donors and the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service (CHHS).

The \$5.6 million Cancer Care Hub at Cairns Hospital has been brought to life through more than \$1.5 million in community fundraising, with support from local donors, events and corporate partners helping transform cancer care for the region.

Funds raised through initiatives including the Foundation's signature events, community giving and donor contributions have helped deliver a range of patient-focused improvements, including:

- A beautiful new outdoor balcony on Level 2, D Block, offering patients, families and friends a welcoming space with one of the best hospital views in Australia
- A significantly expanded pharmacy enabling local manufacture of chemotherapy drugs
- A refurbished day oncology treatment space in the Liz Plummer Cancer Care Centre

- A larger, modern meeting room with upgraded teleconferencing technology to better support rural and remote patients
- Increased patient interview rooms to enable more private health conferences.

Foundation CEO Gina Hogan said the project was a powerful example of what could be achieved when the community came together to support local healthcare. "This Cancer Care Hub exists because our community stepped up," Mrs Hogan said. "Every ticket purchased at a fundraising event, every donation made and every partnership formed has helped create a space that supports patients not just clinically, but emotionally and socially as well. "We are incredibly grateful to the donors, event participants and supporters who made this possible. Their generosity is making a real difference for people facing cancer in Far North Queensland."

CHHS Chief Executive Leena Singh said the Cancer Care Hub represented a transformative step forward for cancer care in the region. "This project is about creating a space that fosters healing, comfort and connection for patients and their loved ones during some of the most challenging times of their lives," Ms Singh said.

"Our new balcony space provides a calming environment with stunning views of the Cairns Esplanade and Coral Sea, supporting

emotional wellbeing alongside the excellent medical care we deliver."

She said the refurbished day oncology space increased capacity with additional treatment chairs, bringing the total to 20. "This means we can treat more patients each day and improve access to lifesaving care," she said.

"Our new expanded pharmacy inside the Cancer Care Centre will allow local production of chemotherapy drugs for the first time. This new facility will streamline workflows and help us meet the growing demand for cancer treatment across Far North Queensland, delivering timelier, high-quality care closer to home."

Ms Singh said the project would not have been possible without the community's generous support.

"The \$1.5 million raised through the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation has helped ensure our patients receive care in a space that truly supports their physical and emotional wellbeing," she said.

Tribute has been paid to key donors including Joyce Swinton, Kenfrost Homes, Mills Family Foundation, Denise and Ellis Richardson, Rotary FNQ Field Days, BDO Arrow Experience, Unit's Jetski Fundrun, Matthew Calanna, Mitchell Family's Wheelbarrow Race and hundreds of smaller individual donations.

Cyclists advance care

As one piece of life-changing cardiac technology has arrived at Cairns Hospital, organisers have already announced their next major target from the Australian Retirement Trust Cardiac Challenge.

When seconds matter in a cardiac emergency, it's not just the skill of clinicians that counts - it's the technology guiding their decisions in real time. That's where a \$250,000 cardiac monitoring system, recently installed in Cairns Hospital's Cardiology department, is making a difference. Funded by hundreds of riders in the annual Cardiac Challenge hosted by the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation, the new ComboLab system is helping specialists detect and treat abnormal heart rhythms with greater precision.

And the Foundation has announced a \$3.7 million Computed Tomography (CT) Coronary Angiography Project as its latest cardiac fundraising target. Cairns Hospital Director of Cardiology Dr Steve Sutcliffe said patients receiving treatment would not see the screens or hear the data being analysed. But behind the scenes, the ComboLab technology was capturing clearer, more detailed

electrical signals from the heart - giving the Electrophysiologist and Cardiac Catheter Lab team a more accurate picture of what's happening.

"That means clinicians can identify problem areas faster, guide treatment more precisely, and reduce the time patients spend undergoing complex cardiac procedures," Dr Sutcliffe said.

"For people experiencing arrhythmias, that can translate to safer interventions, shorter procedures, and a quicker path to recovery."

The software system is one of many purchased for cardiac services in the 19 years the ride has been occurring - ranging from diamond drills to ultrasounds, chest compression devices, a large contribution to the second cardiac catheter laboratory, cardiac outreach vehicle and equipment, portable cardiology monitors, echocardiogram carts, cardiopulmonary exercise testing equipment, lung function testing equipment, endobronchial ultrasound to name just a few. Foundation CEO Gina Hogan said the new system was yet another example of cyclists supporting the cardiology team to deliver high-quality care to Far North Queensland patients, closer to home.



"As this year is our 20th, we're delighted to be able to see the benefits of this equipment continuing to support patients throughout the Far North," Mrs Hogan said.

And the Foundation is equally excited about another tangible project to fundraise for - the CT Angiography Project. "We're pleased to be partnering with the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service which is contributing \$1 million and the Foundation has already committed a further \$1 million from funds previously raised for cardiac services. We are now asking the community to help raise the remaining \$1.7 million needed for this equipment," she said.

Riders fund lung test

Patients across Far North Queensland can now access world-class heart and lung testing close to home, with Cairns Hospital introducing advanced cardiopulmonary exercise testing (CPET) in its Respiratory Department - thanks to community support through the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation.

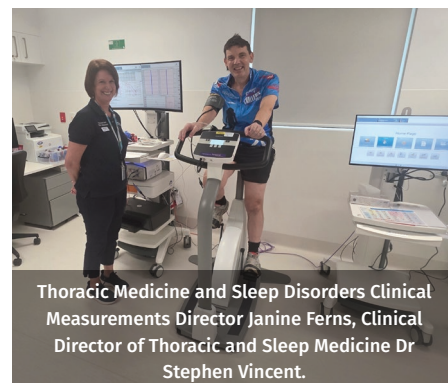
For the first time, people who previously had to travel to Brisbane while unwell can now undergo this complex, internationally recognised diagnostic test right here in Cairns - reducing stress, cost and disruption for patients and families across the region.

The \$67,000 system was funded through the Australian Retirement Trust Cardiac Challenge, where hundreds of cyclists ride from Cairns to Cooktown each year to raise funds for medical equipment and services across Far North Queensland.

Thoracic Medicine and Sleep Disorders Clinical Measurements Director Janine Ferns

said CPET was considered the gold standard for investigating unexplained breathlessness and assessing how well a person's heart, lungs and muscles work together during exercise. It plays a critical role in diagnosing complex respiratory and cardiac conditions and in determining whether patients are fit enough to safely undergo major surgery.

"Until now, our patients needing this level of assessment often faced long journeys south - sometimes multiple times - for testing and follow-up care. Delivering CPET locally removes that burden and ensures patients can receive a full, international-standard pulmonary work-up without leaving the region. During the test, patients ride a stationary exercise bike while specialist equipment closely monitors oxygen uptake, carbon dioxide production, breathing patterns, heart rate, blood pressure and oxygen levels. The results give clinicians a detailed, real-time picture of how the heart and lungs perform under physical stress - information that cannot be obtained through standard tests alone," Ms Ferns said.



"In simple terms, CPET helps doctors pinpoint why a patient becomes short of breath - whether the limitation is coming from the lungs, the heart, the muscles, or a combination of factors - allowing treatment to be tailored with far greater accuracy."

Clinical Director of Thoracic and Sleep Medicine Dr Stephen Vincent, also a Cardiac Challenge participant, said the National Lung Cancer Screening Program meant they anticipated numbers to increase and the equipment would be in great demand.

Leading healthy choices

Healthy choices are becoming the norm at Cairns Hospital - and the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation is leading the way.

Long recognised for funding equipment and research to support patients when they are unwell, the Foundation also plays a growing role in prevention - using its cafes, catering services and fresh food vending machines to make healthier food and drink options the easy, everyday choice.

Through its cafes, catering services and fresh food vending machines, the Foundation has played a key role in reshaping the hospital's food environment - making healthier options easier to access, more visible and appealing for staff, patients and visitors.

The Foundation's Social Enterprises have again been recognised by Health and Wellbeing Queensland, as leading the shift towards healthier food choices.

This focus is driving a significant shift in how people choose to eat while at the hospital, with healthier options increasingly becoming the go-to choice.

Foundation CEO Gina Hogan said supporting better health outcomes extended beyond equipment and services.

"We're known for funding equipment and supporting care when people are unwell, but another important part of our work is also creating environments that support healthier choices every day," Mrs Hogan said.

"We all know lifestyle and diet play a major role in long-term health, so it makes sense that the food environment within a hospital reflects that.

"What's really encouraging is seeing staff, patients and visitors embrace those healthier options. When they're easy to find, well-presented and appealing, people are choosing them - and that's a positive outcome for everyone."

The Foundation operates SeaBreeze Cafe, dCafe, FNQ Foundation Feast and fresh food vending machines across the Cairns Hospital campus and now externally, with each outlet designed to make healthier food and drink options a simple, practical choice.

This approach also has contributed to Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service achieving 100 per cent compliance with Queensland's A Better Choice standards - reflecting the strength and consistency of



Foundation Executive Chef Michael Orford, Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service Food Services Senior Supervisor Brenton Miller, Foundation Social Enterprises Manager Michael Hooper and CHHS Food Services Manager Charlie Kumara.

healthy food and drink options across all outlets.

Foundation Social Enterprise Operations Manager Michael Hooper said the shift had been driven by small but deliberate changes across every outlet.

"The transition has been overwhelmingly positive across all our services," Mr Hooper said.

"We've focused on making healthier options clearly labelled and easy to access. When you get that right, people respond."

Health and Wellbeing Queensland's A Better Choice Strategy, introduced in 2021, encourages healthier food environments through a traffic light system - promoting "green" options, increasing "amber" choices and limiting "red" items.

Health and Wellbeing Queensland Chief Executive Dr Robyn Littlewood said results across Queensland showed the impact of that approach.

"The program is driving real change, supporting hospitals to increase healthier choices in their cafes and vending machines," Dr Littlewood said.

"Research shows that when nutritious,

appealing options are available, customers are more likely to choose them."

The Foundation's work in enhancing food and drink environments at Cairns Hospital was recognised at the 2025 A Better Choice Healthcare Awards, where it received the Transforming Food and Drink Environments Award.

Mrs Hogan said the recognition reflected a long-term commitment to improving health outcomes across the region.

"Our focus has always been on supporting better health for our community, and creating healthier food environments is a practical way we can do that every day," she said.

The Numbers:

- CHHS achieved 100% performance, compared with:
- Queensland average of 75%.
- 100% of audited outlets met food targets in 2025.
- 100% of audited outlets met drink targets in 2025.
- 100% compliance across both retail outlets and vending machines.



Cairns Hospital Digital Technician Advanced David Elms, Donor Anne Mills, Cairns Hospital Director of Oral Health Dr Harry Robertson and Foundation CEO Gina Hogan.

3D printer speeds care

Dentistry in Far North Queensland is going digital - and for patients, that means getting the care they need sooner.

The addition of a second, larger 3D printer at Cairns North Oral Health is speeding up the production of dentures and dental models, helping reduce wait times and improve access to care across the region - thanks to the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation.

When the first printer was introduced in 2023 (also thanks to the Foundation), it marked a major shift from manual denture production to faster, more accurate digital workflows, helping reduce wait times for patients.

Now, the new, larger printer is taking that impact even further.

Cairns Hospital Director of Oral Health Dr Harry Robertson said the upgraded technology had significantly improved efficiency in the laboratory.

"The larger printer has enabled us to print multiple large objects such as impression trays, models and dentures all at the same time," Dr Robertson said.

"For example, we can now print seven impression trays in just 90 minutes - something that previously would have taken around six hours across multiple print runs." The increased capacity means the smaller

printers can now be dedicated to more detailed work, such as denture bases and teeth, improving workflow across the entire lab.

"The larger printer has allowed previous bottlenecks in the printing sequence to be removed," he said.

Since the digital laboratory was established at Cairns North, approximately 650 denture units have already been produced using digital processes- alongside those created using traditional methods.

The impact is being felt across the region, with all dentures for Mossman and Yarrabah clinics now 3D printed, and growing numbers being produced for FNQ patients.

Importantly, the added capacity is helping reduce waiting times for manufacturing dentures for people who rely on the oral prostheses to maintain their health and wellbeing.

"Being able to chew food properly is vital for good general health, particularly for patients managing conditions like diabetes," Dr Robertson said.

Beyond the clinical benefits, the improved technology also is enhancing patients' confidence and quality of life.

"Dentures don't just restore function - they help people feel like themselves again," he said.

"The introduction of the digital laboratory has helped the team in lowering the wait times for dentures by two thirds, which is just incredible for our patients."

The \$19,000 equipment was funded by long-time Foundation donor Anne Mills, of the Mills Family Foundation. Mrs Mills said the project really resonated with her family.

"Our Foundation is built on family money, so for us it's about giving back in a way that genuinely helps people in our community. Knowing this technology will get patients seen faster and improve their quality of life, made it an easy decision. It's incredibly rewarding to support something that's going to make such a real, practical difference for families across Far North Queensland," Mrs Mills said.

Foundation CEO Gina Hogan said by investing in advanced equipment like 3D printing, the Foundation was helping ensure patients across the region could access modern, high-quality care close to home.

"This is a great example of how the Foundation works with our health partners to invest in practical solutions that make a real difference for patients. By supporting equipment like 3D printing technology, we're helping more people across Far North Queensland access timely, high-quality dental care closer to home," Mrs Hogan said.

Atherton

Bingo in Atherton is helping improve patient care, with funds raised through weekly sessions contributing to a new portable ultrasound for the Medical Imaging Department at Atherton Hospital.

Led by the Atherton Hospital Friends of the Foundation (a subsidiary of the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation), the weekly Tuesday sessions have played a significant role in funding the new equipment, alongside proceeds from raffles, donation tins and other fundraising efforts.

Atherton Hospital Senior Radiographer Jamieson Barnes said the portable ultrasound was already making a difference for patients undergoing imaging procedures.

"Many of the patients we see regularly have undergone treatments that can make



cannulation more difficult over time," Mr Barnes said.

"Using ultrasound as a complementary aid helps reduce the need for multiple attempts, minimising discomfort for patients and improving safety during procedures," he said.

The technology is primarily used to support cannulation for outpatients prior to CT scans, including patients referred from specialties such as oncology, urology, respiratory and general surgery.

Mr Barnes said the introduction of the portable ultrasound also reflects broader developments in medical imaging.

"Point-of-care ultrasound is a growing area

because it provides rapid, non-invasive imaging to support clinical care," he said.

"While we're still in the early stages across the Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service, increased access to equipment like this positions us well to expand its use in the future."

Atherton Hospital Volunteers President Mary Fitzsimons said the achievement reflected the persistence and commitment of the local volunteer community.

"Our bingo volunteers show up week-after-week without complaint, raising funds that directly support better care for patients in our hospital," Mrs Fitzsimons said.

Babinda

DEMENTIA residents at Babinda Multi-Purpose Health Service will benefit from a new interactive wellness system designed to enhance cognitive engagement, comfort and overall quality of life, thanks to a generous community donation.

The OmniVista interactive projection system has been installed in the facility's aged care ward, which includes 11 residential aged care beds. The equipment was made possible through a donation from the Community Bank Babinda, via the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation.

Director of Nursing and Facility Manager Romy Clark said the \$17,000 technology would play an important role in supporting residents living with dementia.



"By implementing OmniVista in our facility, we can significantly enhance the experience of our dementia residents by providing engaging, meaningful activities that support both their cognitive and emotional wellbeing," Ms Clark said.

"The system integrates memory games, brain exercises and other stimulating activities that encourage mental engagement and have been shown to help maintain cognitive abilities for as long as possible."

In addition to cognitive stimulation, the OmniVista system offers a range of sensory-based activities projected onto tables or floors, allowing residents to interact through gentle movement and touch.

"These sensory activities can be incredibly calming," Ms Clark said. "They provide comfort, help reduce agitation and can improve mood, which is so important for residents living with dementia."

friends of the foundation

Supporting our community

Gordonvale

Born from community fundraising and sustained by generations of local volunteers, Gordonvale Hospital today celebrates 100 years of service, recognising a legacy of support that continues today through the Gordonvale Friends of the Foundation.

The hospital was established in 1926 as the Gordonvale Soldiers' Memorial Hospital after local residents rallied to raise funds for a facility that would care for the district's sick and injured while particularly honouring two brothers lost in World War I. Today, that same community spirit lives on through the Friends of the Foundation, who continue to raise funds to support patients, families and staff.

The earliest fundraising efforts were led by community members including Edith O'Neill, who helped drive support for a memorial hospital and even produced the Wilgor Cookery Book to raise funds for the cause.

Mrs O'Neill's two sons – Acting Sergeant



William O'Neill and Second Lieutenant James Gordon O'Neill were killed in WW1.

Gordonvale resident Barry O'Neill is Edith's great-grandson and said he feels honoured the family still has close connections to the community and hospital.

Mrs O'Neill helped drive support for the hospital and even produced the Wilgor Cookery Book to raise funds for the cause.

That same spirit of local support has continued through the decades, with groups including the Sewing Guild, Women's Auxiliary, Gordonvale Action Group, Gordonvale Memorial Hospital Auxiliary and, more recently, the Gordonvale Friends of the Foundation helping to raise

funds and improve facilities.

The modern auxiliary was re-formed in 1990 after then Director of Nursing Robyn Greenfield called on staff and community members to help fund equipment needed by the hospital. The group later came under the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation banner in 2002 and became known as the Friends of the Foundation.

Over the years, the Gordonvale Friends of the Foundation has contributed an estimated more than \$500,000 worth of equipment, including pressure-relieving beds and mattresses, syringe drivers, lounge suites, chair beds, recliner chairs and shower chairs.

Mareeba

Patients at Mareeba Hospital are enjoying a more comfortable, connected and calming hospital experience with the installation of 50 smart televisions across all inpatient beds.

The new TVs funded through donations and grants to Mareeba Friends of the Foundation (a subsidiary of the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation), ensure every patient has access to free to air television and radio.

Mareeba Hospital Director of Nursing and Midwifery and Facility Manager Michelle Bombardieri said the upgrade has delivered immediate benefits for both patients and staff.

"These TVs provide positive distraction through watching TV, listening to music or movies, which helps reduce pain, discomfort



and anxiety," Ms Bombardieri said.

"Patients feel more relaxed and comfortable, and for those who stay in hospital for extended periods, having access to television makes the environment feel more homely and less isolating"

She said patients valued having greater control over their surroundings, while nursing staff had noticed improvements in overall patient wellbeing because of the donation. All televisions are fully integrated with the patient nurse call system, allowing patients to control volume, channels and sound directly through

their bedside handsets.

The project was delivered at a total cost of \$91,805, funded through a \$36,805 Bendigo Bank Community Grant, \$13,700 from FNQ Growers, and \$41,300 from general funds, including bingo proceeds and memorial donations made in honour of Kevin Davies, Robyn Boundy, Dennis Howe and Boris Stankovich.

Mareeba Friends of the Foundation President Tom Braes said the project showed how community fundraising directly improves patient care.

Research grants unveiled

Far North Queensland will benefit from a significant boost to medical and health research, with almost \$250,000 awarded to 18 innovative projects tackling some of the region's most pressing health challenges.

The Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation funded projects span infectious diseases, chronic illness, First Nations health, culturally safe care, and emerging digital therapies, all led by clinicians and researchers working across Far North Queensland and northern Australia.

Several projects focus on diseases that disproportionately affect tropical regions.

Cairns Hospital Infectious Diseases Specialist Dr Simon Smith is leading the \$50,000 LESSISMORE study, which will examine whether a lower dose of oral antibiotics for melioidosis can be as effective as the current higher dose used, potentially reducing side effects and improving patient outcomes.

"We've had more than 170 people contract

melioidosis in FNQ since January 2025 and patients are given a long course of intravenous antibiotics followed by oral antibiotics. Unfortunately, the oral antibiotics are prone to causing quite significant side effects in around half the people taking them and include severe nausea and vomiting, kidney, liver and bone marrow issues and severe, widespread rashes," Dr Smith said.

"We are still giving people a long course of intravenous antibiotics and from our previous work, we know that this does most of the heavy lifting when it comes to treating melioidosis. However, even with this, the infection can come back in some people. What we're looking at is halving the dose of oral antibiotic in 50 percent of trial participants (those who agree to take part). We know it's the higher dose of oral antibiotics we use that causes a lot of the severe reactions. What we'd like to see is if the lower dose is just as effective at curing melioidosis and preventing it from recurring, and avoiding most of the severe reactions we see," he said.



Foundation Research and Education Committee chair Professor John McBride said collectively, the projects represent an investment of almost \$250,000 in research that is locally relevant, clinically meaningful, and focused on improving health outcomes for people living in FNQ.

"By supporting clinicians and researchers working on the ground, this funding helps ensure solutions are developed with the community and for the community – now and into the future," Prof McBride said. "Grants range in value from \$1080 to \$50,000, with a rigorous peer review process involved in deciding the successful applicants," Prof McBride said.

TB under the 'scope

A small investment by the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation has delivered an extraordinary return - helping to unlock millions of dollars in national and international research funding and positioning a locally led tuberculosis (TB) research project on the global stage.

The research, led by Professor Andreas Kupz at the Australian Institute of Tropical Health and Medicine at James Cook University, is tackling one of the most critical questions in infectious disease research: why the century old Bacille Calmette-Guérin (BCG) vaccine protects young children but fails to provide lasting immunity into adulthood.

Answering that question could unlock the development of a far more effective TB vaccine, with the potential to save lives both in Australia and around the world.

TB remains one of the deadliest infectious

diseases globally, claiming around 1.5 million lives each year. While Australia has a relatively low incidence overall, the burden is disproportionately high among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. At the same time, neighbouring Papua New Guinea continues to experience one of the world's most severe TB epidemics, creating an ongoing risk of drug resistant TB entering northern Australia.

In 2018 and 2019, the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation awarded two rounds of seed funding- a \$5000 grant followed by a \$50,000 grant - to support the early stages of the research. That funding enabled critical groundwork, including ethical, regulatory and site approvals across Cairns, Thursday Island and Bamaga, as well as extensive community engagement to build participation and trust.

Professor Kupz said the Foundation's support was pivotal in getting the project started.



"These early steps are often the hardest to fund, but they are absolutely essential," Prof Kupz said.

"Without that initial support from the Foundation, none of what followed would have been possible."

The strong base established through the Foundation backed seed funding helped the team secure two highly competitive grants from the National Health and Medical Research Council, collectively worth more than \$2.5 million, in 2020 and 2021.



Community steps up

More than 140 dedicated walkers helped raise more than \$48,128 for a bedside ultrasound, at the BDO Arrow Experience: Wangetti Edition, on Sunday.

Hosted by the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation, the walk drew corporate teams and families to participate in one of the most scenic walks available so close to the city.

Foundation Fundraising and Marketing Manager Jenny Coates paid tribute to participants, donors, sponsors and volunteers for bringing the event together.

"It was a break from the Arrows of Mt Whitfield that we usually do, and from what we can tell, most people enjoyed the opportunity to try something new, with the safety of knowing we had guides on track," Mrs Coates said.

The choice of a different location was to coincide with Cairns Regional Council's 150th celebrations.

"We're actually really impressed with some of the fundraising efforts – two teams raised more than \$3000 on their own and \$489 was brought in by the highest fundraising individual," she said.

Funds raised from the community trail walk will go towards an ultrasound machine for the Sub-Acute Care Unit, an off site 48 bed facility in Manoora that provides care for older people and those needing rehabilitation, such as patients recovering from a stroke or a hip operation. It also is an enabling environment for the care of people living with dementia.

"This is a great result all round: better care for vulnerable patients, reduced pressure

on health services, and a tangible example of community support making a difference with this equipment."

Mrs Coates also thanked long-standing sponsors BDO North Queensland, FGF, Avis, Star 102.7 Cairns, Cairns Regional Council and Rotary Cairns Northern Beaches.

Walkers met at the northern end of Palm Cove, where they were bussed to the event start at Ellis Beach and accompanied with regularly placed guides throughout the walk.

Upon the conclusion back at Palm Cove, participants were met with coffee, a free sausage sizzle, face painting and a fun atmosphere.

Donations are still welcome at www.arrowexperience.org.au.





SEPTEMBER 19-21, 2026

WE'RE FUNDRAISING FOR A CARDIAC CT



Help us bring a dedicated Cardiac CT service to Cairns Hospital, so more patients access faster, more accurate diagnosis, right here in our community.



This \$3.7 million project is a partnership, with \$1 million contributed by the health service and the Foundation raising the remaining \$2.7 million with our community.



OUR GOAL: \$3.7 MILLION

Every donation makes a difference.



**HELP US BRING
CARDIAC CT TO CAIRNS
DONATE TODAY**

Scan the QR code
or visit:

www.cardiacchallenge.com.au



Australian
Retirement
Trust

far north queensland
hospital
foundation

www.fnqhf.org.au

Book assists kids grief

We all experience grief in our lives - whether it be through the loss of a loved one, a serious diagnosis, family breakdown or sudden change.

However, it can be especially overwhelming for children who may struggle to understand or express their feelings.

Recognising this challenge, Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service social worker Emily Bodenmann has created *A Very Big Feeling* - a thoughtfully written and illustrated children's book designed to help children and families learn how to cope with grief and begin important conversations during difficult times.

The book supports children experiencing grief across a wide range of situations, including end of life, the death of a friend or loved one, a difficult diagnosis, bullying and other life changing events.

Already in use throughout Cairns Hospital, *A Very Big Feeling* has received overwhelmingly positive feedback from

healthcare staff, children and families - prompting the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation to contribute to a print run to help reach more families across the region.

Mrs Bodenmann said the idea for the book came about through supporting a family experiencing end of life, and recognising the children in the family required special support.

"I wrote and illustrated it with that family in mind initially, but grief is something that we all struggle with in life. Many adults have told me they find the book supportive because the simpler language and illustrations are a helpful way of exploring something as big and as complex as grief," Mrs Bodenmann said.

The Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation was honoured to support the book's publication by assisting with printing costs, in conjunction with Lotsa Printing.

Foundation CEO Gina Hogan said the book filled an important gap in how children are



supported through grief.

"Grief can be incredibly complex, particularly for children who don't yet have the words to describe what they're feeling," Mrs Hogan said. "*A Very Big Feeling* is a gentle, compassionate resource that helps children make sense of big emotions while supporting families to have meaningful conversations at an incredibly vulnerable time," she said.

Further community support would help ensure the book could be shared more broadly across Far North Queensland.

Help deliver comfort

Community support is helping deliver comfort, dignity and compassion to patients receiving palliative care in the Cancer Care Ward at Cairns Hospital - and with more donations, even more families can be supported when they need it most.

Palliative patients are now being supported with newly developed Comfort Care Packs, thoughtfully designed to provide warmth, dignity and gentle comfort during a deeply emotional time. Each pack is made possible through community donations and helps ensure patients and their loved ones feel cared for beyond clinical treatment.

The Comfort Care Packs were created by Cancer Care Ward nurses, who support many palliative patients through the final stages of their cancer journey - some for only a short time, others who

become part of the ward family after months or even years of care.

Cairns and Hinterland Hospital and Health Service Cancer Care Ward Clinical Nurse Kozue Kelly said the packs were developed from a deeply personal place, in partnership with the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation.

"We care for many palliative patients, and while we always provide the best clinical care possible, there are moments where we wish we could do just a little more," Ms Kelly said.

"These Comfort Care Packs are our nurses' wish list - the items we wish we'd been able to provide in the past to support patients and their families during end-of-life care. Palliative care involves so much more than a pack, but this can add an extra layer of comfort at a very difficult time."

Each pack contains carefully chosen



items designed to soothe both body and mind, including a café voucher, soft neck pillow, fluffy socks, fleece blanket, no-rinse shampoo cap, lip balm, nail set, silicone drinking straw, hairbrush, lavender essential oil, notebook, water bottle, chamomile tea, biscuits, a memory pouch for keepsakes such as a lock of hair or photograph, and a grief information envelope.

Cafe Chat

Name: Kay Smith.

Which café do you work at? I oversee both cafes but at the moment mainly at Sea Breeze.

Have you always lived in FNQ? If not, where did you come from and how long have you been here? Not at all! I'm originally from Essex in the UK and have been lucky enough to live in several countries around the world. Since coming to Australia, I've lived in Sydney, Berowra and the Gold Coast before making my way to FNQ, which I've proudly called home since December 2012.

When did you start with the Foundation: I joined the Foundation in May 2026.

Star sign: I'm a Scorpio, apparently my bite is worse than my sting.

Interest, hobbies, past times: My biggest interests are family, food, wine and enjoying those wonderful, unexpected life experiences that are a little outside the

norm. Over the years, I've had some pretty adventurous pastimes, including street lugging, skateboarding and singing and there's plenty more where that came from!

Tell us about your family – kids, grandkids, great grandkids? Family is a very important part of my life. I have four children – two living here in Australia and two back in the UK as well as three grandchildren who are all in the UK.

What do you do with yourself when you are not working with us? When I'm not at work, I love spending time with family and friends, and you'll often find me at hockey. I enjoy keeping busy, being around good people and making the most of my time outside of work.

What do you enjoy most about working with us? Without a doubt, it's the team. I really enjoy being part of such a great group of people, and it's the people around you who can make coming to work something you genuinely look forward to.



What do you know about the Foundation and its role within the community? The Foundation plays such an important role in supporting our local hospitals, healthcare services and the wider community across FNQ. I know the Foundation helps provide support, equipment, resources and funding that can make a real difference to patients, their families and the incredible healthcare teams who look after them. I'm really proud to now be part of the team. I'm looking forward to learning more, getting involved and seeing first-hand the difference we can make together.

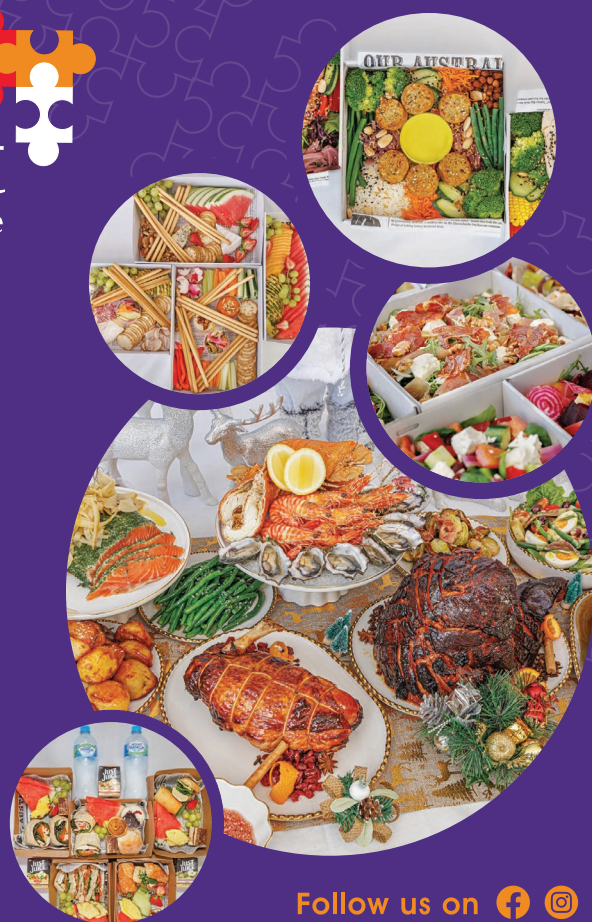
FNQ
foundation feast
Catering For A Cause

**ORDER
YOUR NEXT
CATERING @**

W: www.fnqfoundationfeast.org.au

E: catering@fnqhf.org.au

P: 07 4226 8993 **M:** 0417 151 775



Follow us on  

Vollie Q&A

Name: Elsie Di Bella.

Age: 78.

Have you always lived in FNQ? If not, where did you come from and how long have you been here: I was born in Italy, came to Australia when I was 30 and have lived the rest of my life in FNQ.

What Is Your Volunteer role: I am part of the craft ladies group.

When did you start volunteering with us? Since 2010.

How did you come to start volunteering with us: Through my friend, who was a part of the FNQ Volunteers.

Star sign: Aries.

Interest, hobbies, past-times: crocheting, sewing and playing with my dachshunds.

Tell us about your family – kids, grandkids, great grandkids? I have one daughter and

one granddaughter.

What do you do with yourself when you are not helping us? Go out to lunch with friends or be with my family.

What do you enjoy about volunteering with us? It is rewarding. I love being able to help the hospital and my community.

What's the most rewarding part of volunteering: Seeing how the money raised helps the hospital.

If you could describe your volunteering experience in three words, what would they be: Rewarding, fulfilling, friendship.

How has volunteering impacted your life: Gives me purpose, brings me joy and friends.

What advice would you give to someone thinking about volunteering: Do it, you won't be sorry. It is as rewarding for you as for the Foundation.



Sign up here

WOULD YOU LIKE TO GIVE BACK TO OTHERS IN NEED?

Become a volunteer at the Far North Queensland Hospital Foundation! Make an impact in health care and be part of a compassionate community.



Email: volunteer@fnqhf.org.au or call 42268993

far north queensland
hospital
foundation

You're part of something bigger

Your QSuper account is managed by Australian Retirement Trust.

That means you're with one of the biggest super funds in Australia, with a focus on strong long-term returns. One that believes in the power of super to change lives and create a better future for all Australians.

We're on a mission to help you awaken your super and unleash its monster potential.

Find out more qsuper.qld.gov.au/bigger



QSuper products are issued by Australian Retirement Trust Pty Ltd (ABN 88 010 720 840, AFSL 228975) as trustee for Australian Retirement Trust (ABN 60 905 115 063). Consider the PDS and TMD before deciding at qsuper.qld.gov.au/pds.



HOW TO CONTACT OR SUPPORT US

📍 Ground Floor Block E Car Park Corner of Grove & Digger Streets

✉ PO Box 957 Cairns Q 4870

☎ 07 4226 6553

@ ceo@fnqhf.org.au

@ admin@fnqhf.org.au

📞 fundraising@fnqhf.org.au

👤 volunteer@fnqhf.org.au

🌐 www.fnqhf.org.au

