



34 SYNOD 2019

Report from

UnitingCare Queensland



Our work at UnitingCare Queensland is underpinned by our mission to improve the health and wellbeing of individuals, families, and communities so they can “live life in all its fullness” (John 10:10).

UnitingCare Queensland provides aged care, disability supports, health care and crisis response in Queensland through Blue Care, Lifeline, the Wesley Hospital, St Andrew’s War Memorial Hospital, Buderim Private Hospital and St Stephen’s Hospital. We provide community, aged care, disability and mental health support in the Northern Territory through Australian Regional and Remote Community Services (ARRCS).

Every day in the community we engage with people from all walks of life. We deliver skilled, evidence-based interventions for those facing adversity, and utilise our reach and vision to confront injustice. We are leaders in crisis response, the protection of vulnerable children, financial resilience and family wellbeing. We meet people where they are and walk alongside them to achieve positive change and growth. Right across Queensland, UnitingCare supports thousands of people in redefining what’s possible in their lives.

Focus since the last Synod

Since the last Synod we have been focused on delivering against our 2018–20 strategic priorities, controlling costs, while also long-term planning for the future and making early necessary changes that will ensure our sustainability and best position to realise our mission in a sustainable manner.

Highlights:

Since the last Synod we have made significant progress towards our strategic priorities, positively increasing our social impact in the communities we serve and the people we care for and support.

We have developed an affordable housing strategy and implementation plan, implemented CARE phase II targeting foster and kinship carers across the state, and continued our work to implement initiatives to support clients and employees in transitioning to the National Disability Insurance Scheme (NDIS).

We have established effective partnerships across our services with the Sleep-Well Service Pilot and the Project Search initiative. Effective partnerships have been forged with external organisations working together to deliver key initiatives that support vulnerable children, families and young people through the Newpin program and the Brisbane Recovery Centre for Out-of-Home Care Reform Pilot.

Our network of hospitals continues to excel in bringing the latest technological advances and specialist services to our patients, including recognition as a Centre of Excellence in Robotic Surgery—attracting some of Queensland’s best specialists to our hospitals and building on our network of Visiting Medical Professionals (VMPs).

We have redesigned the customer experience in consumer-directed sectors in aged care and disability, partnered with other health professionals on the Blue Care Live Well Centre initiative and employed Registered Nurses who identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander in our Pinangba services in Cherbourg, Condon and Thursday Island.

We have welcomed and have been actively participating in the Royal Commission into the Quality and Safety of Aged Care in Australia. We have adopted a philosophy of openness and transparency with the Commission, and see it as a landmark opportunity to advocate strongly for the people we serve. We are hopeful this Royal Commission will improve the quality, safety and accessibility of aged care services for all Australians.

Our mission is at the heart of everything we do. Since the last Synod we have developed our mission framework which provides the primary context for articulating our UnitingCare Queensland identity as a particular expression of the mission of the Uniting Church in Australia. It is a foundational resource for board members, leadership teams and staff (both paid and voluntary) to guide and challenge our organisational practices, policies and behaviours. Drawing on the foundational DNA threads of the Uniting Church, it provides the lens through which we assess our alignment with our purpose that every person might “live life in all its fullness” (John 10:10). We have used this as a foundation in our induction of staff and volunteers.

This is a snapshot of what our people have been able to achieve to meet the expectations set out in our existing 2018-20 Strategic Plan.

Whilst this work has been significant, we know much more needs to be done, which is why we have embarked upon the development of a 10-year vision and strategy program to paint a clear picture of where we need to be in 2030, and developing the plan that will take us there. This program is outlined below.

Priority Directions

To ensure the long-term achievement of our mission, we have initiated our **2030 program**, a program tasked to develop a clear 10-year vision of where we need to be in 2030. This work is positioning us to capitalise on our long-term opportunities and overcome our challenges, thus enabling us to realise our mission long into the future.

The 2016–20 priorities of the Uniting Church in Queensland have informed both the mission of UnitingCare Queensland and our 10-year 2030 vision and strategic priorities, outlined below.

Our 2030 vision is bold: *“To be Australia’s most trusted and respected health and community services provider, delivering exceptional, values-based care to Queensland families in every corner of the community, and globally recognised as a leading light in care model innovation for ageing people.”*

To achieve this vision, our three priority directions are as follows:

- 1. Aged Care and Community Services:** To be the market leader in high-quality, innovative, person-centred aged care services in the home and in the community.
- 2. Family and Disability Services:** Expand our social impact through the growth of our child and family services and an optimised disability service offering.
- 3. Hospitals:** Operate highly regarded, clinically excellent hospitals delivering the best possible health and life outcomes for patients.

To execute against these three priority directions, we need to make internal improvements in the following areas:

- 1. People:** We need to foster a more empowered and loyal workforce, with a values-based culture that places our customers and those who serve them at the centre of everything we do.

2. **Business:** We need to ensure top quartile quality and operational excellence across all of our health and community services.
3. **Technology:** We need to utilise technology that provides fit-for-purpose, foundational applications, supports efficiency outcomes and enables innovative service models.

How we will do this is just as important as what we are doing, and it is how we will do this that will most align us to the 2016–20 Uniting Church in Queensland priority of being Christ-centred.

Throughout our 2030 strategic change program we will hold firm to our values and beliefs:

- Compassion
- Respect
- Justice
- Working together
- Leading through learning

Challenges/risks as we progress

UnitingCare Queensland has very strong foundations. We have an inspiring history of servanthood, innovation and a strong community standing and enviable reputation.

Our state-wide footprint is immense, and we have a complementary portfolio of health services unique to any other health and community service organisation in Australia. We maintain one of Australia's highest regarded hospital groups and a valuable asset base. Last, but certainly not least, we maintain an organisation driven by mission and values.

Notwithstanding this, we face significant challenges over the coming decade.

Over the past five years we have continued to experience below-average financial performance, driven by Government funding cuts, increased operating costs and an inflexible industrial relations environment in health and aged care.

This below-average financial performance presents a significant challenge as we also maintain a large ageing asset base of facilities which are increasingly costly to maintain to a standard that meets the reasonable expectations of the people and communities we serve.

Our portfolio of services is also fragmented, and it is incumbent upon us as good stewards of the resources entrusted to us to deploy our limited resources where they can have the largest positive impact on people and communities in need.

These long-term challenges were one motivating factor for the development of our long-term 2030 vision and strategy.



To overcome these challenges, our 2030 strategy has set some very clear strategic guardrails for UnitingCare to adhere to so that we can rein in costs, grow our organisation where it is sustainable and there is strong community need, while holding steady in other areas.

Our high-level vision, strategy and prioritisation settings to overcome these challenges are outlined overleaf.

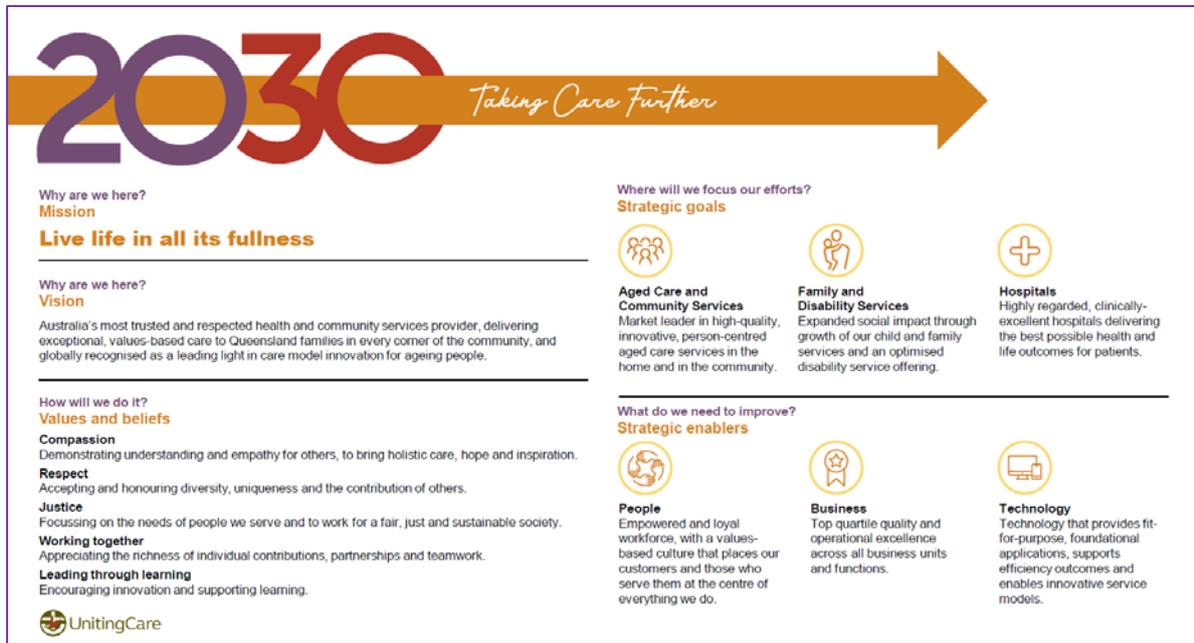


Figure 1.0 (UnitingCare Queensland 2030 Vision and Strategy)



Figure 1.1 (UnitingCare Queensland 2030 Strategic Prioritisation Settings)

For consideration

At the time of writing, a Royal Commission into Violence, Abuse, Neglect and Exploitation of People with Disability has been formally announced by the Federal Government. As with the Royal Commission into Aged Care, we welcome this measure and will be participating openly and transparently with the Commission and advocating strongly for the people we serve in this context throughout its expected three-year duration.

Proposal

It is proposed that the 34th Synod receive this report.

Contact for report questions

Name Matthew Cuming
Position Director Corporate Affairs
Email matthew.cuming@ucareqld.com.au
Phone 0450 536 788