



# NEWSLETTER



Emergency Medicine Foundation Board members, award recipients, and other senior health leaders, celebrate the 2026 EMF Grants Award Ceremony

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## Celebrating the 2026 EMF Grant Recipients

TAAHC congratulates Amanda McConnell (Cairns Hospital and Health Service), Emma Whyte (Townsville Hospital and Health Service), and Dr Vinay Gangathimmaiah (Townsville Hospital and Health Service) on receiving Emergency Medicine Foundation (EMF) Research Grants, announced at the 2026 EMF Grants Award Ceremony.

The 2025–26 grants round recognised a record number of EMF-funded emergency medicine research projects, reflecting the strength, diversity, and translational impact of clinician-led research across Queensland. These projects play a vital role in translating real-world evidence into practice, strengthening the health system and improving patient outcomes.

TAAHC is proud to collaborate with partner organisations contributing to this important body of emergency medicine research across northern Queensland.

[View the full photo gallery here](#)



## Partnering with Health Translation Queensland (HTQ) to deliver the 2026 Implementation Science Health Conference Australia (ISHCA26)

ISHCA is **Australia's premier implementation science conference** for the health sector, focused on implementing the best evidence in healthcare. It aims to offer opportunities for capacity building, networking and collaboration in implementation science and practice through a stimulating 2-day program of events.

ISHCA is coming to Queensland (Qld), and will be held at the **Translational Research Institute, in Brisbane, on Nov 26-27<sup>th</sup> 2026**. This is an incredible opportunity for Qld, as it's the first time ever the conference will be hosted outside of NSW or VIC. TAAHC are playing an integral role in organising the conference, in collaboration with HTQ and other leading health and research translation partners. We have active members on both the Scientific Program and Organising Committees who are able to advocate for rural, regional, and remote opportunities.



## Photography Competition goes live!

This year, we are running a **photography competition** to bolster our community engagement through connection and meaningful participation. This competition will highlight the incredible landscape and people in which, and with whom, we live and work.



## FRAMING HEALTH IN THE TROPICS

### Stories of care, community, and place

TAAHC is inviting photographers to capture the people, places, and landscapes that define regional, rural and remote healthcare and research across tropical north Qld.

We're building a photographic library to support our website, annual report, and publications – and we want to showcase the diversity, strength, and uniqueness of the communities we serve.

**ENTRIES OPEN: 27<sup>TH</sup> MAR 2026**

Submit your photographs online via the [Entry Form](#) and agree to the competition Terms and Conditions\*

#### Criteria includes

- ✓ Healthcare or research in regional, rural or remote settings
- ✓ Healthcare workers, learning and partnering for impact
- ✓ Community life, wellbeing, and connection
- ✓ Landscapes and environments that we live and work in.





Sharon Kelly, TAAHC Board Chair

## A word from the Board Chair

As Chair of the Tropical Australian Academic Health Centre (TAAHC), I am pleased to reflect on the continued progress across our partnership.

This edition highlights the strength of our research community, including the significant contribution of women leading research and translation across northern Queensland. Recognition of International Women and Girls in Science Day reinforces the importance of supporting leadership, capability and locally driven research that reflects community need.

We also acknowledge the recent Emergency Medicine Foundation (EMF) grant recipients. These awards highlight the quality and impact of clinician-led research that is directly improving care and strengthening our health system.

Our partnership with CSIRO to deliver regional FHIR training is another important step in building digital capability and enabling more connected models of care across regional, rural and remote settings.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate a clear focus on translation, collaboration and impact. I thank our partners, clinicians and researchers for their continued commitment to improving health outcomes.

## Second Research Translation Fellow onboarded in Jan

We are delighted to welcome **Chrissie Timbs** to the team as the newest **TAAHC/MHHS Research Translation Fellow**.

Chrissie is a highly respected senior health service leader with more than 13 years of experience in Qld Health. During her eight years with the Mackay Institute of Research and Innovation, she has developed extensive expertise in implementing and evaluating health-related projects and programs that deliver meaningful, real-world impact.

Her leadership has contributed to a wide range of transformative initiatives, including digital innovation projects such as clinical voice-to-text solutions, clinical and operational improvement projects to enhance patient flow and outcomes, and major research translation programs including Choosing Wisely, Rural Emergency and Trauma Enhancement, and Enhanced Recovery After Surgery.

Chrissie joins **Stevie Perks** as the second TAAHC Research Translation Fellow. Together, they work across northern Queensland to strengthen research translation capability within TAAHC member organisations.

Their work involves partnering with clinicians, researchers and community stakeholders to implement and evaluate projects that bridge the gap between evidence and practice. This includes providing education and supporting the design of quality improvement initiatives that enhance patient outcomes, service efficiency and workforce capability across regional, rural and remote communities.



Chrissie Timbs, TAAHC/MHHS Research Translation Fellow

## Congratulations to the Recipients of the 2026 Emerging Leaders Fellowship Program

The Women's Health Research, Translation and Impact Network (WHRTN) Emerging Leaders Fellowship (ELF) Program—supported by the Australian Health Research Alliance (AHRA)—is a premier national leadership initiative designed for early and mid-career researchers in women's health. The program offers tailored mentoring, networking opportunities, and participation in the Monash University Women in Leadership Program, all aimed at **strengthening the leadership capability of women researchers**.

As a proud member of both the Australian Health Research Alliance and the Women's Health Research, Translation and Impact Network, TAAHC is delighted to celebrate the achievements of our regional research community.

We extend our warmest congratulations to **Pieta Shakes** and **Kristen Barratt** from James Cook University on their acceptance into the 2026 Emerging Leaders Fellowship Program.

We look forward to following their journey and the opportunities this prestigious program will help unlock.

## Regional FHIR Training for Qld Health Staff

TAAHC was pleased to support and promote the delivery of Regional Fast Healthcare Interoperability Resources (FHIR) Training for Qld Health staff in partnership with CSIRO's Australian e-Health Research Centre.



Building capability in digital health and interoperability is essential to strengthening our health system—particularly in regional, rural and remote communities, where connected care has the potential to deliver the greatest impact. This training represents a practical and important step toward enabling better data sharing, more coordinated models of care, and improved health outcomes across northern Queensland.

It was encouraging to see strong engagement from clinicians, researchers and health service staff, demonstrating a shared commitment to advancing digital health capability across the region. Their participation reflects a collective belief that investing in interoperability today will help create a more connected, efficient and equitable health system for the communities we serve.



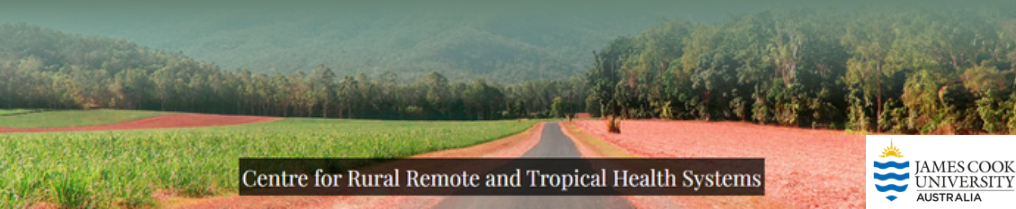
Rudolf Schnetler, Research Data Lab Lead, Digital Health Research Fellow THHS, Scott Davis, TAAHC, and David Hansen, CEO and Research Director CSIRO



# Centre for Rural, Remote and Tropical Health Systems

Dr Scott Davis has recently joined the Centre for Rural, Remote, and Tropical Health Systems (CRRTHS) Management Committee, where he will play an important role in guiding and supporting the Centre's work over the next 12 months. The Committee's purpose is to build and strengthen networks among researchers, health service leaders, frontline providers, professional associations and other sector stakeholders who share a commitment to improving health systems across our regions.

In the year ahead, CRRTHS will focus its research activity across three priority areas: **systems for healthy ageing, strengthening the health workforce, and digital and data connectivity.** These themes reflect areas where the Centre's collective expertise can make a meaningful contribution and provide a framework for collaborative research, partnerships, and capacity-building efforts.



Centre for Rural Remote and Tropical Health Systems



## Celebrating International Women and Girls in Science Day

We proudly celebrated women whose curiosity, leadership and expertise continue to shape science, health and research translation—particularly across regional, rural and remote Australia.



Dr Samantha Teague is an NHMRC Emerging Leadership Senior Research Fellow at James Cook University, who's revolutionising perinatal mental health support through social media.

With \$50,000 in TAAHC Seed Funding, Dr Teague is developing **Beyond the Bump – a world-first preventative intervention** that leverages Facebook to deliver evidence-based mental health support to expectant and new mothers across rural and remote communities.

*"The perinatal period is a critical window for establishing the foundations of family life. Supporting parents' mental health during this time has a profound ripple effect on children's cognitive and social-emotional development."*

Cindy Sealey is redefining what meaningful research looks like. As a governance professional passionate about person-centred care, Cindy saw an opportunity to bridge two worlds: bringing community voices directly into research design, delivery, and leadership.

With \$50,000 in TAAHC Seed Funding, Cindy is building **sustainable consumer and community research partnerships across rural, regional, and remote northern Qld** – ensuring research priorities reflect the people they're meant to serve.

*"By empowering communities to take part, lead, and translate research, we're not just improving systems – we're changing how we do research."*



Kylie Fischer is a Clinical Nurse Educator and Clinical Trials Coordinator with Torres and Cape HHS, whose research is transforming acute burn care for children across Qld's most remote communities.

With almost \$40,000 in TAAHC Clinical Research Fellowship funding, Kylie is mapping current burn care models across five Queensland Hospital and Health Services, working with frontline clinicians and cultural advisors to co-design evidence-based solutions.

*"By working together across disciplines and communities, we can build a system where every child receives the best possible care when they need it most."*



## Research Translation Course

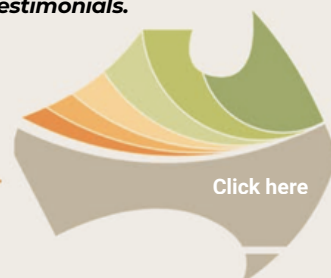
We're pleased to announce that seven teams from across our partner organisations have now commenced the 2026 Research Translation Course. Selected through a competitive EOI process, this year's cohort brings together a diverse mix of Sonographers, Pharmacists, Nurses and Midwives, Indigenous Health Workers, Speech Pathologists, and Medical Officers.

Building on last year's success, we are delighted to welcome three new co-facilitators from the Torres and Cape, Mackay, and Townsville HHSs. Their involvement strengthens our commitment to growing research translation capability across the region.

Over the next seven months, project teams will meet monthly as a cohort to participate in education sessions and share progress. Between group meetings, facilitators will provide tailored support to help teams advance their protocol development. The course blends pre-recorded learning modules, group activities, and one-on-one mentoring, guiding participants to produce a research translation protocol and a one-page logic model suitable for ethics submission or grant applications.

**Click the below image to watch last years Participant Testimonials.**

2025 Research Translation Course



Participant Testimonials

youtube.com

Research Translation Course Participant Testimonials

Interested in the TAAHC Research Translation Course? Find out wha...



Click here



## From Seed to Success: How a small TAAHC grant contributed to region-wide investment

A \$49,500 TAAHC Seed Grant awarded to Dr Alice Cairns in 2020 has grown into one of northern Queensland's most successful examples of research translation, capacity building, and system-wide impact. What began as a modest project to develop an evaluation framework for rural community allied health services stimulated multiple new research projects, enabled a new generation of researchers, and created a performance framework poised to reshape allied health service delivery across the region. Incredibly it was also a catalyst for > \$5.6 million in further funding.

The project's early **scoping review**, revealed a fragmented landscape of rehabilitation outcome measures and limited usable data across rural and remote Australia. This evidence base became the foundation for deeper engagement with health services—despite COVID-19 disruptions that derailed the original Delphi design. Alice's adaptive approach, centred on maintaining strong relationships with health service leaders, led to an embedded partnership with Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service (TCHHS). She has supported TCHHS to design their Allied Health Performance Framework, grounded in the Quintuple Aim and now progressing toward a full-service implementation pilot in mid-2026.

The seed grant unlocked a chain of major investments, including an NHMRC supported Early Career Fellowship, a \$270k CRC-NA project, and provided supportive infrastructure for a \$4.66M FNQ Connect initiative awarded to Prof. Ruth Barker, and a \$633k MRFF collaboration. Equally significant is the project's role in **building research capability across northern Queensland**. Alice now supports all five Northern Hospital and Health Services, delivering practical training in evaluation and quality improvement to rural allied health teams.

By 2026, the work is influencing executive-level discussions about shared rural research and evaluation projects across all northern health services. **This seed-funded project has become a blueprint for how small investments can generate transformative, system-level change—demonstrating what is possible when research, partnerships, and persistence align.**

## TAAHC in the Spotlight at Developing Northern Australia Conference 2026

TAAHC will be prominently featured at the **Developing Northern Australia Conference 2026**, with Executive Director Prof Scott Davis delivering a keynote in Alice Springs this August.

His presentation, *Health, Community and Cultural Resilience: Locally Led Research Development and Translation Driving Change Across Northern Australia*, will highlight how community-led research, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leadership, and applied research translation are strengthening health outcomes across regional, rural and remote northern Australia.



## TAAHC Research Resources

Interested in research but not sure where to start? Or looking for some guidance to help progress your research? Browse our curated list of resources!

[Browse our curated list of resources](#)



## What's Ahead

We're gearing up for an exceptionally busy year, with a clear focus on delivering against our strategic objectives. As we move into Quarter Four, here are some of the key developments you can look forward to seeing unfold.

- Finalising the collaborative framework: **Local Improvement to System Impact: Research Translation Model for Northern HHSs**
- Embedded use of the **TAAHC Framework to Assess Impact (FAIT)**
- Delivery of the **FAIT Workshop** with the TAAHC Board and key Partner Organisation stakeholders
- Delivery of the first **Research Translation 101 Course** for JCU staff
- TAAHC Prac **Research Education Webinars**

## “ A message from the Executive Director | One year on..

Tuesday, 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2026 marked my anniversary of joining TAAHC as Executive Director, and rather than reflect on the role, I would like to celebrate the people. Over the past 12 months, I have had the privilege of working alongside extraordinary individuals across our TAAHC partnership: researchers asking rigorous, regionally relevant questions; clinicians embedding evidence into practice; and health service leaders backing innovation, capability building and system improvement.

To our colleagues across Cairns and Hinterland, Torres and Cape, Townsville, North West and Mackay Hospital and Health Services, James Cook University, Northern Queensland Primary Health Network, our Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, and the broader TAAHC ecosystem, you are the reason this work matters.

What stands out most is not a single project or milestone. It is the collective commitment to building capability in our system. It is the clinician who undertakes research alongside service delivery.

It is the executive who invests in a Research Translation Fellow role. It is the researcher who partners early with services to design work that will scale. It is the teams who measure impact, not just activity. That is how systems mature. That is how equity improves.

It is also the collaborative effort across organisations that allows us to grow and develop. When we work together across health services, primary care, academia and community-controlled sectors, we amplify our impact. We strengthen capability beyond individual institutions. Most importantly, we support real world outcomes for the communities we serve.

Over the past year, we have strengthened governance, sharpened our focus on impact, and progressed new models of research development and translation. These structures only work because of the calibre of people across our partnership who are prepared to collaborate across boundaries and build something larger than any one organisation.



Northern Queensland has world-class thinkers, deeply committed clinicians and courageous system leaders. TAAHC provides the platform. You provide the capability, the credibility, and the momentum.

Thank you for your leadership, your generosity, and your shared belief that regionally led research and innovation can improve outcomes for our communities. It has been a privilege to work alongside you this year. The system we are building together is stronger, and the future is genuinely exciting.

