



Norfolk Island health services

Transition issues and information

September 2021

Frequently Asked Questions

These Frequently Asked Questions will be continuously updated as more information becomes available, so make sure to check back regularly to find the most up-to-date answers.

Where are you up to with transitioning essential services for Norfolk Island?

The Australian Government is committed to providing stability to the Norfolk Island community through a long-term partnership that delivers state-level services, to a standard comparable to similar communities on the mainland.

On 20 June 2021, the Australian and Queensland governments signed a Heads of Agreement, outlining an intention to develop an enduring partnership to support the provision of specific state-level services to Norfolk Island.

The Queensland Government is in the process of making a formal decision on whether to deliver services to Norfolk Island. Should the Queensland Government agree to partner with the Australian Government, it is proposed that essential health support and school education services currently delivered by the New South Wales Government will transition to the Queensland.

Initial discussions have already commenced between the Australian, Queensland, and New South Wales governments regarding the potential transitional arrangements for health support services to NIHRACS.

As the formal arrangements are being developed and agreed, we are focusing on supporting your ongoing engagement and input into the transition process.

Will the Norfolk Island Health and Residential Aged Care Service (NIHRACS) become part of Queensland Health?

Should Queensland partner with the Australian Government, NIHRACS will continue to operate as an independent entity, funded and supported by the Commonwealth. It is anticipated that NIHRACS would be supported by a Queensland Hospital and Health Service providing similar support to that currently provided by the South Eastern Sydney Local Health District (SESLHD).

Initial discussions have already commenced between the Australian, Queensland, and New South Wales governments regarding the potential transitional arrangements for health support services to NIHRACS.

All parties want to ensure transition is as smooth as possible, with a focus on patient care.

The Australian Government is committed to ensuring the community and NIHRACS staff experience as little change as possible.

We expect to be in a position to provide more information on this soon.

Will NIHRACS staff contracts and entitlements change with the transition to a new service delivery partner?

Staff will continue to be employed and managed by NIHRACS directly, with the existing Enterprise Agreement separate to any delivery partner arrangements.

What will happen if the transition to a new partner is not finalised before 31 December 2021?

NIHRACS will continue to coordinate care for those seeking health services on Norfolk Island. The majority of services currently delivered by NIHRACS will continue to be delivered independently including the GP clinic, physiotherapy, dental clinic, counselling and residential aged care.

Norfolk Island residents can continue to access healthcare in mainland Australia, including in New South Wales, in line with Medicare principles.

The Department of Infrastructure, Transport, Regional Development and Communication (the Department) is working with NIHRACS Senior Management to mitigate any possible disruption to services and ensure the best outcomes for the community.

When are we going to know how the transition will work?

The Australian Government will continue to update the Norfolk Island community, including staff at NIHRACS, as discussions around the transition of support for NIHRACS progress.

Why isn't anyone from government level communicating clearly and consulting with us about the transition?

Initial discussions have already commenced between the Australian, Queensland, and New South Wales governments regarding the potential transitional arrangements for health support services to NIHRACS.

All governments are committed to providing information and answers to the questions received as soon as possible.

When appropriate, NIHRACS staff through the new NIHRACS Transition Project Manager will be invited to provide input into the development of new support arrangements when that work commences. The community will also be able to engage throughout the transition process.

When will a NIHRACS Transition Project Manager be appointed?

The NIHRACS Transition Project Manager has been recruited and has commenced in the position.