

BETTER HEALTH *stories*

HEALTHY
NORTH COAST

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NORTH COAST
An Australian Government Initiative

Winter 2025



We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands across our region, and pay our respect to Elders past, present and on their journey.

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Coordination

Primary health services stand strong for the community during Tropical Cyclone Alfred

In March 2025, Ex-Tropical Cyclone Alfred caused major damage in South East Queensland and Northern NSW, including widespread coastal erosion, damaging winds, power outages, structural damage, widespread heavy rainfall and flooding.

Building on lessons learned from previous climate disasters in the region, including the devastating Northern Rivers floods in 2022, Healthy North Coast worked under the disaster management leadership of NSW Health and the Australian Government to make sure the health response was coordinated and effective.

Leveraging local partnerships with primary health care providers and Aboriginal Medical Services, Healthy North Coast worked to ensure vulnerable communities continued to receive primary health care during and after the weather event.

[Find out more](#)

As at March 2025:

12 GPs attended evacuation centres, with **100+** hours of GP care coordinated + funded by HNC

HNC helped **76** general practices and community pharmacies update their service hours in the healthdirect Service Finder

1,475 calls to the healthdirect phone service from the North Coast region, resulting in **171** GP telehealth appointments

501 calls to North Coast Health Connect, resulting in **49** direct bookings into general practice and **4** direct bookings into pharmacy

361 calls to the Medicare Mental Health Phone Service. This was a **40%** increase in service usage compared to an average fortnight

240 hours of mental health clinical supports provided at Recovery Access Points in the recovery phase

548 HNC staff hours dedicated to response and recovery efforts



Commissioning

Strong foundations: Building resilience in children and young people to help them recover from disaster

The Northern Rivers floods in 2022 caused catastrophic impacts across the region with many local families still recovering from this event. 7,300 people were displaced and had to use emergency accommodation. 4,055 properties were declared uninhabitable, with a further 10,849 properties sustaining additional damage.

The severity and increasing frequency of weather-related disaster events due to climate change, and the greater vulnerability of children affected by disasters, means these events can have considerable negative consequences for young people's development.

Resilient Kids is a program that was co-designed with young people, family members and health and education professionals to support children and young people in the Northern Rivers to:

- ▶ recover from trauma
- ▶ reduce long-term mental impacts of climate disasters and
- ▶ promote social and emotional wellbeing

The program is delivered by Social Futures, in partnership with The Family Centre and Human Nature Therapy.

[Find out more](#)



2,551 young people have participated in school-based workshops

568 young people have engaged in structured individual or group cases of support (e.g. counselling, therapeutic groups, social & emotional wellbeing groups)

2,030 young people have attended funded community events

More than 420 parents and caregivers have been involved with Resilient Kids

"It's really improved my confidence and I find school a lot easier."
- Young person

"My worker has given me so much help. I don't think I'd be in the state that I am in if I hadn't of seen [them]...wouldn't be as strong"- Young person

"It was a miracle to get her somewhere in a new group [that's] unfamiliar and get her to participate. Over the years we have taken her to different places and it hasn't happened because her disability won't let her." - Parent/caregiver

"Drawing attention to all the facets of young people's lives where they can look for strengths develops a greater understanding of themselves, how they fit into the world around them and where to look for support during tough times." - School staff



Capacity Building

North Coast health providers build confidence in culturally safe care

Healthy North Coast's 2021 Health Needs Assessment community survey revealed that 1 in 3 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander respondents said they stopped or delayed getting health care because they were unable to access culturally safe services.

Healthy North Coast is responsible for improving the capacity of primary health care professionals to deliver culturally safe care, under the Australian Government's Integrated Team Care program.

Training is rolled out each year to support local health providers gain a richer understanding of Aboriginal history and culture. The training blends online learning modules with on-Country experience, to increase local cultural awareness and enable health professionals to develop practical skills so they can deliver culturally safe health care to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients.

[Find out more](#)



7 in 10 attendees at the May 2025 Bundjalung/Tweed training said it fully met their goal of building confidence to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients

7 in 10 attendees said they will definitely implement steps to provide culturally safe and acceptable health care to Aboriginal patients in their practice

301 North Coast health professionals have attended cultural safety training and **1,956** CPD hours were awarded (ACRRM + RACGP) since 2023



"Training gave me a much better understanding of Aboriginal culture and how to provide safer space." - Practice Manager

"This event so far has been eye opening. It's very refreshing to be able to learn and hear from Uncle Dave and Uncle Hilton and about their experiences too." - Office Manager

"Informative. I have attended cultural workshops previously however there was still new information and knowledge I didn't know." - Practice Manager

