



2025 South East Queensland First Nations Health Equity Conference

National Lung Cancer Screening Program in Action in SEQ

Workshop summary

The Implementing the National Lung Cancer Screening Program in SEQ workshop was held on 23 October 2025: Day 1 of the SEQ First Nations Health Equity In Action Conference, 2025.

The workshop was facilitated by Sharon Sweeney, Executive Director, Quality and Innovation, IUIH and Professor Melissa Eastgate, Operations Director, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, Metro North Hospital and Health Service and Chair of the Medical Oncology Group of Australia.



Workshop purpose

This workshop aimed to strengthen collaboration across the health sector to ensure the seamless delivery of the National Lung Cancer Screening Program, supporting a culturally safe and well-connected client journey for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in SEQ.

Workshop attendees

Approximately 50 people attended the workshop with representatives from SEQ First Nations Health Equity partner, Queensland Health Statewide Respiratory and Sleep Clinical Network, Cancer Council Queensland, Clinical Support Queensland (Queensland Health), Breast Screen Queensland, and the Australian National University.

What we heard

What's working: Community-based screening is well-received, with strong uptake when programs are culturally tailored and supported by community champions.

Access & Eligibility: Barriers to screening including complex referral pathways, limited self-referral options, restrictive eligibility criteria, and transport and cost challenges.

Workforce & Training: There is an urgent need for training and resources for GPs, alongside an opportunity for health services to strengthen smoking cessation teams and culturally appropriate health promotion.

Cultural Safety & Community Engagement: Culturally safe care, community-led approaches, and early engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocates are needed to build trust, reduce stigma, and support client autonomy.

Communication, Coordination and System Barriers: Effective lung cancer screening requires stronger care coordination roles and multidisciplinary team involvement to ensure timely results and reduce fragmented communication across services. At the same time, system usability issues and cross-sector concerns around privacy, consent, and autonomy highlight the need for improved digital infrastructure and stronger collaboration to support safe and effective information sharing.

What we'll do next

Care Pathways

- Engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander advocates and care coordinators early and consistently.
- Integrate incidental findings (e.g., cardiovascular, respiratory) into care pathways.
- Leverage mobile services.
- Embed and advocate for culturally safe practices.
- Establish care pathways and partnerships with community-controlled organisations.
- Ensure care is holistic and addresses common barriers to access, including transport, accommodation, and food.
- Expand and simplify referral pathways and promote self-referral.

Workforce Training, Resources and Education

- Use community days, yarning circles, and outreach programs for screening and education.
- Push for stable funding and more education on culturally safe practice.
- Provide rapid training and practical tools to support GPs and clinicians.
- Develop culturally appropriate smoking cessation and health promotion resources.

Thank you

We thank the following people for presenting at this workshop:

- Scott Roetman and Sophie Phelan, Clinical Support Queensland, Queensland Health
- A/Prof Lisa Whop and A/Prof Raglan Maddox, Australian National University
- Valma King, Metro North Hospital and Health Service

On behalf of the SEQ First Nations Health Equity Governance Committee, we thank all participants in this workshop. Your contribution is invaluable as we **move forward together, with energy, optimism, and intent** to achieve health equity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in South East Queensland.

