

Strengthening Clinical Trial Pharmacy Services Across Regional, Rural and Remote Queensland

Kara Milne¹

1. Queensland Regional Clinical Trial Coordinating Centre (QRCCC)

Health Services Evaluation, Research and Translation Branch, Clinical Excellence Queensland, Queensland Health

Introduction

To support clinical excellence and build sustainable clinical trial pharmacy capacity across Queensland, a statewide clinical trial pharmacist position was introduced to the Queensland Regional Clinical Trial Coordinating Centre in October 2024. This initiative aimed to support regional, rural, and remote health services in delivering high-quality, safe, and efficient Investigational Product (IP) services, including as Primary and Satellite Sites within a Teletrial Cluster.

Scoping

Initial scoping identified a concentration of workforce and clinical trial pharmacy expertise in metropolitan and larger regional centres, with significant gaps in smaller regional, rural, and remote areas. A comprehensive mapping process was undertaken to pinpoint these disparities and guide targeted support.

Outcomes

Tailored assistance was provided, primarily via virtual platforms and supplemented by in-person visits, to sites with newly established roles, sole clinical trials pharmacists, those managing clinical trials without dedicated FTE and rural and remote sites receiving in already dispensed IP as part of a Teletrial Cluster.

The map depicts engagement across Queensland Health, and support provision to Clinical Trial and Pharmacy Departments for clinical trials, including teletrials.

Relationships were established across all Hospital's and Health Services, and support was provided based on local needs. This included education to Pharmacy Departments surrounding the Australian Teletrial Program and the QRCCC, working through logistics and feasibility for individual trials, providing guidance of the development of clinical trials pharmacy services and providing ad-hoc mentoring and support.

Professional development was a key focus, with the creation of collaborative networks, sharing of governance processes, and delivery of education and training programs. These efforts extended to non-dispensing satellite sites, fostering ethical conduct, consistency in practice, enhanced governance and reassurance to sponsors that clinical trials requirements were able to be met.

Impact

This initiative had a measurable impact on workforce development and service delivery. Outcomes include the opening of clinical trials involving IP in all Hospital and Health Services across Queensland Health, initiation of the first IP-inclusive trial in a very remote (MM7) locality and the establishment of clinical trial pharmacy services at a regional hospital to support its expanding clinical trial unit.

Conclusion

By embedding professional standards for clinical trials and fostering leadership across diverse settings, this model demonstrates an effective approach to moving forward in clinical trial workforce development and facilitating access to clinical trials involving IP across Queensland.

Support provision across Queensland

