



Queensland Health

# Brain and Spinal Cord Injury Project – BaSCI

The Brain and Spinal Cord Injury (BaSCI) Project has developed partnerships between consumers and clinicians to deliver service improvements and better access equity to specialist rehabilitation care closer to home for people with brain and spinal cord injuries in Queensland.

**\$24 million** Commonwealth funding over 5 years

**Statewide** impact through **service improvement** and clinical pilots

Queensland consumers accessing BaSCI-funded specialist rehabilitation **closer to home**, community, and Country

Healthcare Improvement Unit, **Clinical Excellence Queensland** implementation July 2021 to June 2025

**24 service pilots** delivered

**76 FTE** clinical project roles funded

**Workforce** capacity building through accredited training and skill development

**158 individual clinicians** involved in project-funded specialist rehabilitation pilots

**7 Hospital and Health Services (HHSs)** funded

**51 new frontline clinical roles** have been recurrently funded across 5 HHSs to date

**5 HHSs** now offer dedicated specialist adult rehabilitation through **expanded service provision**

BaSCI delivered across Queensland by **15 FTE project staff and clinical leads**

53 project staff engaged in development of **leadership and change management skills**

**\$8.7M recurrent funding** for new specialist services



Queensland  
Government

# Meaningful actions to address complex system challenges

Queensland has historically had statewide service models for specialist brain and spinal cord injury rehabilitation – the Queensland Spinal Cord Injuries Service and the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Service. Both offer excellent specialist services and are operationally delivered through Metro South Hospital and Health Service (HHS) but have unique access challenges across the care continuum. BaSCI's work has been to address these challenges.

## Spinal Cord Injury Services

### More timely access to specialist care

Early referral to a specialist spinal unit delivers better outcomes for people with new injuries. Complex system issues and limited bed stock have resulted in extended waiting times for admission to the only specialist spinal injuries unit in Queensland. To immediately improve safety, BaSCI piloted new roles and services in 5 HHSs, including:

- QuickStart in Metro South HHS
- North Queensland Spinal Cord Injuries Service in Townsville HHS
- Embedded specialist spinal cord injury portfolios in Gold Coast, Sunshine Coast and Metro North HHSs.

As part of the Queensland Spinal Cord Injuries Service,



the new QuickStart in-reach team is working in partnership with the North Queensland Spinal Cord Injuries team in Townsville and the embedded specialist spinal portfolios in Metro North, Gold Coast and the Sunshine Coast.

This collaboration provides earlier access to expertise and extends the service model across Queensland to provide more timely access to specialist care, regardless of where a person with a new spinal cord injury is admitted in Queensland.

#### Reflections from a consumer:

"I feel as though the early information QuickStart gave me about my spinal cord injury set me up for my rehab. Getting the spinal cord injury knowledge early was really helpful. They gave me honest information about what to expect with my injury which I really appreciated."

#### Reflections from a clinician:

"The ability to bring care to where the patient and family need it has been a key benefit and a real shift caused by BaSCI. Building workforce and expanding services, testing new models, and putting roles in other facilities has helped us acknowledge that not all people with a new spinal cord injury need to come to Brisbane for rehabilitation. We can do safe and quality care differently."

#### A bigger plan for future system change

Queensland Health has recently released the Spinal Cord Injury Service Delivery Model. Developed through a co-design process with clinicians and consumers, the model has leveraged the changes and project activities of BaSCI to formalise a new and ambitious vision for specialist spinal cord injury care in Queensland.

#### Brooke

BaSCI Project Officer and Clinical Lead, Metro North HHS



## Acquired brain injury (ABI) rehabilitation

### Specialist care closer to home

Specialist health care is required to support people to return to quality of life in the community after an acquired brain injury (ABI). BaSCI identified service gaps and has prioritised a range of project-funded interventions across Queensland. This expanded service provision improved access to specialist care closer to home and improved consumer outcomes.

#### **Nathan's story: Brain injury community integration services**

Nathan was enjoying a night out when a single, unprovoked king-hit punch from behind left him with a serious brain injury.

"The first thing they told me was that I would have died if I wasn't so close to the hospital."

The inpatient rehabilitation in Townsville was tough, but the real challenge began after hospital. Living with a brain injury has ongoing hurdles most people can't imagine.

It was 5 years post-injury when Nathan connected with the Townville Brain Injury Community Integration Service (BICS), a BaSCI-funded initiative that changed his life. BICS is helping him reconnect with what truly matters: being a good dad, trying to return to work, and regaining a sense of self.

**Nathan suggests the specialisation of services is important:** "There needs to be way more people who know what it takes to get better and then live with a head injury... I'm never going to be the same... but I'm still here."

#### **Cassi's story: Specialist prolonged disorders of consciousness (PDOC) rehabilitation**

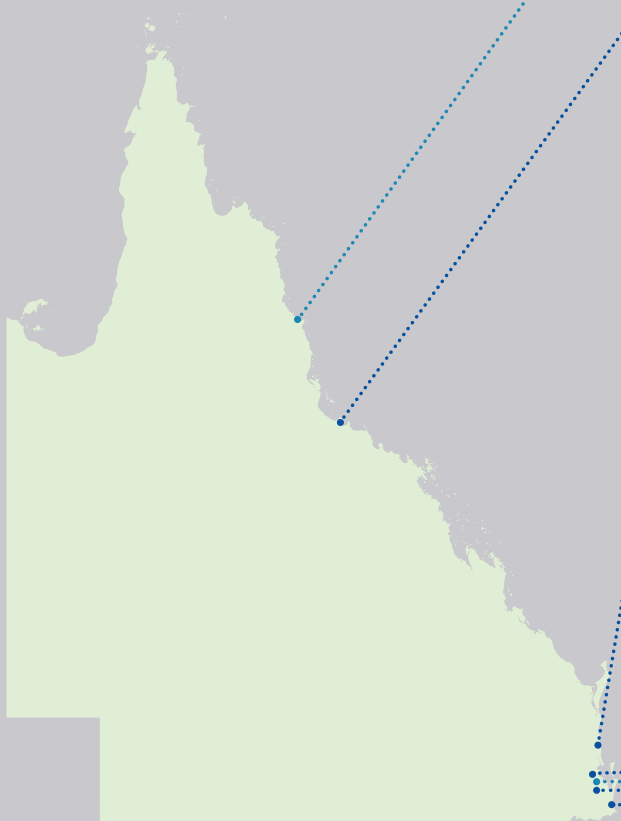
Cassi was 16 years old when she had a catastrophic brain injury from a car accident that resulted in a 437-day hospital admission including receiving acute care at the Princess Alexandra Hospital, Metro South HHS and rehabilitation delivered through the BaSCI-funded Prolonged Disorders of Consciousness (PDOC) Rehabilitation Assessment and Management Project at Brighton Brain Injury Service, Metro North HHS. Cassi emerged from being in PDOC after her injury because of her access to highly specialised brain injury rehabilitation.

Since returning home to her family in Chinchilla, Cassi is hanging out with friends and enjoying getting back in the swimming pool.

**As one consumer with a family member in PDOC said:** "Every person needs to be treated individually and equally. They should be given a chance."

**BaSCI Hospital and Health Service Pilots**

- Recurrently funded
- Project funded
- Service improvement



**Cairns and Hinterland Project Partner**

**Townsville**

**ABI Rehabilitation Pilots**

- Brain Injury Community Integration Service
- Concussion Service
- ABI Follow-up Service
- Culturally Safe Rehabilitation Project

**SCI Service Pilots**

- North Queensland Spinal Cord Injuries Service
- Culturally Safe Rehabilitation Project

**Sunshine Coast**

**ABI Rehabilitation Pilots**

- Brain Injury Community Integration Service
- Concussion Service
- Neuro-Intensive Rehabilitation Service
- Hypertonicity Clinic

**SCI Service Pilots**

- Spinal Clinical Nurse Consultant

**Metro North**

**ABI Rehabilitation Pilots**

- STARS Brain Injury Rehabilitation Unit Uplift
- Specialist ABI Ambulatory Services
- Hospital to Home
- Prolonged Disorders of Consciousness Project
- Acute Disorders of Consciousness Project
- Brain Injury Referral and Triage Service
- Brain Injury Community Integration Service

**SCI Service Pilots**

- Spinal Cord Injury Metro North

**Children's Health Queensland Project Partner**

**Metro South**

**ABI Rehabilitation Pilots**

- Partnering with the Brain Injury Community Integration Service
- Concussion Service
- Acute ABI Inreach Scoping
- Designing a Transitional and Community Model of Specialist ABI Rehabilitation

**SCI Service Pilots**

- QuickStart Inreach Service
- Queensland Spinal Cord Injuries Service website and Educational Hub

**Gold Coast**

**ABI Rehabilitation Pilots**

- Specialist ABI Outpatient Service Model, including concussion and hypertonicity
- Behaviour Support Service
- Brain Injury Community Integration Service
- Driving Clinic

**SCI Service Pilots**

- Spinal Cord Injury Liaison Service

## Working together for real change across Queensland

The BaSCI Project would like to acknowledge the Commonwealth funding received through the Community Health and Hospitals Program 2020-2025.

The BaSCI team, Healthcare Improvement Unit, Clinical Excellence Queensland sincerely thanks the consumers, families, health professionals and community organisations who have contributed to the success of the project.



### More information

For more information contact [HIU@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:HIU@health.qld.gov.au)