

FIRST NATIONS PATHWAYS TO POLICING PROGRAM

TAFE Queensland is working with the Queensland Police Service, the Australian Border Force, and the Australian Federal Police to increase the number of First Nations people pursuing careers in law enforcement.

evante Robinson, 17, is participating in the First Nations Pathways to Policing Program at the TAFE Queensland Cairns campus.

"I am considering joining the army or becoming a police officer, so this course really interested me," Devante said.

"The program is good and I have been learning a lot about communication skills, which is really helpful.

"I have also met a lot of different people who work in law enforcement, and they have been open about their field of work to help me and my classmates decide if we want to pursue the same career path.

"I've met members of the Queensland Police Service. Australian Border Force, and dog squad, and I went on a study tour to Canberra to visit the Australian Federal Police College and learn more about forensics and tactical response.

"If anyone is thinking about joining the program, I would say just go for it!

"If you get an opportunity like this and you're interested in doing any police work, this program is a really good step in that direction," he said.

First Nations Pathways to Policing Vocational and Study Pathways for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander People (11036NAT) upon completion of their training.





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KARMILA'S COMMITMENT TO THE KIDS

Karmila Saunders wasn't always a great scholar but now the proud Yiman woman is committed to learning as much as possible to help her people.

armila, 48, came to TAFE Queensland to study a Certificate IV in Child, Youth and Family Intervention (CHC40313) and a Diploma of Child, Youth and Family Intervention (CHC50313).

"The more I can learn, the more I can help my mob and the kids," she said.

Karmila was raised by her nan and became a young, single mum - an experience that inspired her to make a difference in the lives of troubled vouths.

"I realised I could make a difference in the intervention side of things so that it doesn't get to the point where children are taken from their families - I wanted to help people so that the children don't suffer," Karmila said.

"It's a generational thing, and there is still a lot of trauma going on and people don't realise there are organisations to support them and that there is no shame in asking for help."

Having been a disengaged learner at school, Karmila was humbled by the warm reception she received when enrolling at TAFE Queensland.

"I was worried because I hadn't studied for such a long time and I learn by having conversations and putting pen to paper, not following a link on the computer," Karmila said.

"And just when I was about to start, my dad passed away. I flew into a bit of a panic because I needed to be at TAFE, but I received so much support and calls checking on me from time to time to see how I was going - the support I received was incredible."



Nearing the completion of her certificate training, Karmila knew she wanted to learn more and was encouraged to apply for a \$5,000 TAFE Queensland Scholarship.

Karmila was with a TAFE Queensland Indigenous Student Support Officer when she heard the news that her application had been successful, and she had been granted a scholarship funded by CPL - Choice Passion Life.

"I sat in her office and I cried because I threw my hat in the ring and gave it a go without ever thinking I would actually get it. I achieved something, I wasn't a nobody."

Now working as a team leader for an out-of-home care support agency, Karmila said further study in the mental health field was not out of the question.

"I've still got a lot more to achieve. In my mind I am thinking when I finish this Diploma, where to next? What can I do to help?"



Scan the QR code to watch a video of Karmila.

LEARNING HOW TO TAKE CARE OF HIS MOB

The pandemic caused a shift in Mick Lacey's life that he never knew he needed, and now the proud Wakka Wakka man is reaping the personal rewards of knowing he is playing a pivotal role in improving the health of his mob.

With the loss of his fast-paced job as a travelling sales manager, Mick secured a role as an Indigenous Liaison Officer at Toowoomba Hospital, a step that opened his eyes and his heart to a career in health he now finds incredibly rewarding.

"I really love that I am able to help people in my community and help to improve the health of my mob," Mick said.

"Sometimes I see people on what is the worst day of their lives and it feels good to be there for them and to be able to help them through that."

As well as learning on the job, Mick is also studying the **Diploma of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care** (HLT50113) with TAFE Queensland.

"Honestly, TAFE Queensland has been fantastic. The teachers are so supportive and really want to see you succeed. And everything is so flexible – they understand work commitments."

"I've loved it and whenever I am talking to people as part of my job I am asking them if they are at school and encourage them to think about TAFE, especially healthcare because there are lots of jobs and it's so rewarding."

Mick is the grateful recipient of a \$5,000 **TAFE Queensland Scholarship** thanks to partner CPL – Choice Passion Life.

"I am 46, and we didn't have computers and all of that at school so I've had to learn a lot," Mick said. "I had to buy a laptop and set myself up to be able to study. The scholarship helped me to do that – get myself set up and ready to study.

"I am so grateful that I was able to access the scholarship and I thank CPL for helping to make the TAFE Queensland Scholarships available."

Mick said he plans to enrol in more TAFE Queensland training and complete a business and management course next to further progress his career in the healthcare industry.

"For some people, COVID was the worst time of their lives, but for me it was the best thing that happened – I no longer work 80 hours a week, nor spend so much time away from my family."

"I now have an incredibly rewarding job, have learnt new skills, and been able to take better care of my own health, as well as the health of my family and mob."



Scan the QR code to watch a video of Mick.

I really love that I am able to help people in my community and help to improve the health of my mob.

Mick Lacey

NEVILLE EMPOWERS THROUGH CARE

Graduate Neville Penny is using his training on the frontline to break down barriers and provide people with vital mental health support.

y name is Neville Penny, I am 31 and I live in Townsville with my partner and four-year-old child, Neville.

I am Aboriginal and South Sea Islander. I grew up in Ayr and have a strong connection with my culture and community, and this connection comes from my grandmother's side of the family.

Through my grandmother, I identify with the Nywaigi Tribe of Crystal Creek, North of Townsville, and, on my grandfather's side, I belong to the Bundjalung people, located on the far-north east-coast of New South Wales and the south-east coast of Queensland near Tweed Heads.

I have been working in healthcare for more than a decade, and, from the beginning, it seemed that my path was always set towards a career helping others in various roles in government and non-government organisations.

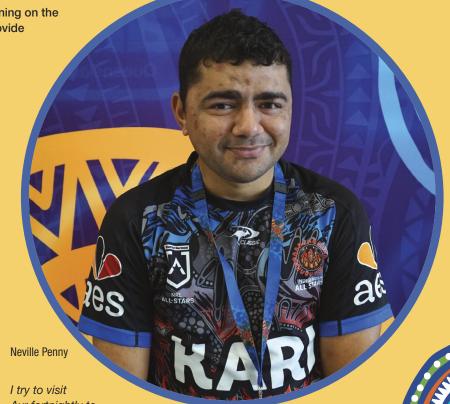
My mum, Lena Watego, has been heavily involved in the Burdekin Area Youth Watch (BAYWatch) for the last 15 years in various jobs with the organisation.

My mum has been in community service work most of her life and this has had a significant influence on my own life.

Having been a foster carer for many years, my mum opened our family home to Indigenous children, who I have come to know as my brothers and sisters.

More recently, my mum started her own driving school business in Ayr, Way To Go Driving.

My mum is a great role model for me and my brothers and sisters - she has shown us how to be successful in life and how to overcome challenges.



Ayr fortnightly to assist my mum at BAYWatch, and I also volunteer with a Townsville men's group, helping members find the support they need if they are struggling with mental health issues.

My early experiences have made me particularly passionate about helping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people navigate the complexities of the mental health sector, and to advocate for those who need assistance to advocate for themselves.

In my culture, there's a lot of stigma attached to the work I do, but I believe I have become a trusted source of information and advice within my community.

Many years ago, I tried to move away from the work I was doing with First Nations people to see if I made sense in another setting, but I didn't.

This work makes me feel connected, it's what I enjoy and it's what feels right to me – this is where I can really make a difference.

I started my vocational education journey more than a decade ago, completing three certificates in alcohol and other drugs and Indigenous healthcare.

After years working in industry, I decided to upskill and further my career by studying a dual award, enrolling in the Diploma of Mental Health and the Diploma of Alcohol and Other Drugs (CHC53215/CHC53315).

But returning to study wasn't without its challenges.

I had a fear of studying online but it was so much easier than I thought, particularly when I engaged the simple but effective strategies provided by my tutor and learning support mentor.

The empathy and understanding I received from everyone at TAFE Queensland helped me overcome obstacles during my training,

including studying on top of a demanding full-time job, the birth of my first child, and the loss of loved ones.

My training helped me gain a better understanding of the intricacies of the industry, cementing strategies and knowledge I had encountered but had no formalised training for.

Not long after finishing my studies, I received a promotion with Queensland Health and took on the role of a Senior Health Worker for Child and Youth Mental Health.

In the last few years, I have transitioned from a small team of four to a large team of 25.

My studies helped me navigate this change by improving my communication, work prioritisation, and time management skills.

Managing different personalities in a large team, I found, can be challenging, but it allows for a variety of views and opinions, which I believe is a good thing.

> I work with a team of nurses, social workers.

> > occupational therapists, speech therapists, and psychiatrists, and I can effectively communicate with these professionals, particularly using industry-specific terms I learned during my course.

Working in a larger team has allowed me to gain a different perspective on things that I may not have considered before.

Following the completion of my studies, I have enjoyed the opportunity to return to TAFE Queensland to speak about my training and industry experience with educators and students.

I enjoyed my studies and I tell people all the time about how my TAFE Queensland training has benefitted my career.

DOMINIC'S INSPIRING JOURNEY AS AN INDIGENOUS NURSE

TAFE Queensland graduate Dominic Cloma is on a mission to bridge the gap in healthcare in rural and regional areas by becoming a Registered Nurse.

ominic's passion towards caring for others is deeply rooted in his heritage.

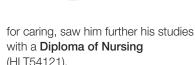
Growing up, Dominic's mother. aunties, and other relatives, both biological and through his Aboriginal lineage, were dedicated carers and nurses who provided kindness and shelter to those in need.

Witnessing these actions strongly influenced Dominic who embarked on his own health and science career after high school.

For years, he worked in pathology, screening samples for cancer, but he sought a new patient-connected career path when he moved to the Gold Coast.

Dominic enrolled in a Certificate III in Health Services Assistance (HLT33115) at TAFE Queensland and secured work in an aged care facility.

Dominic's natural ability to connect with others, coupled with his passion

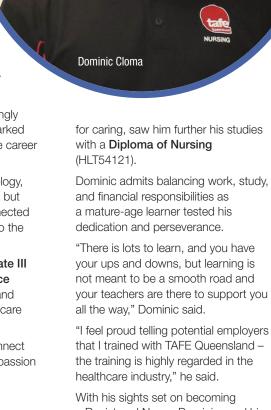


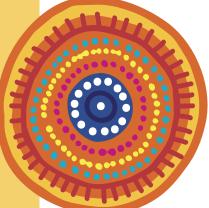
your ups and downs, but learning is not meant to be a smooth road and your teachers are there to support you

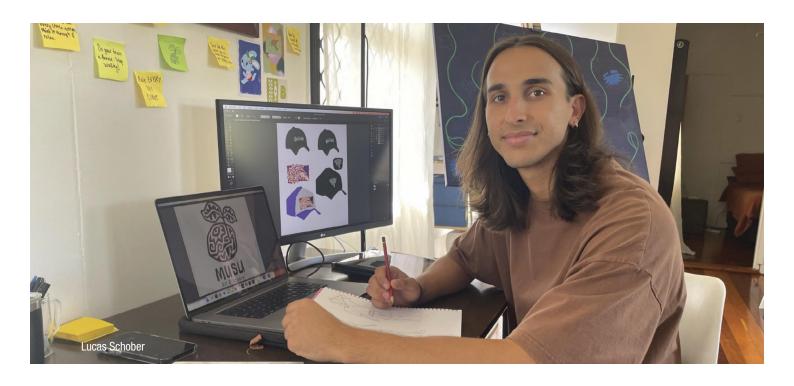
that I trained with TAFE Queensland the training is highly regarded in the

a Registered Nurse, Dominic used his TAFE Queensland training to pathway into a nursing degree at university.

Dominic hopes to bring quality care to vulnerable people and underserved communities, believing everyone deserves access to healthcare, regardless of their location or background.







LUCAS DISCOVERS MORE THAN AN EDUCATION

Moving from Darwin to Brisbane for high school, Wuthathi, Yadheigana, Kaurareg, and Yindjibarndi man Lucas Schober discovered more than just an education.

fter I finished school, I enrolled at university to study for a Bachelor of Civil and Environmental Engineering," Lucas said.

"But having moved away from home and not being surrounded by my family and culture, I felt something was missing, so I decided to explore turning my passion for Indigenous art into a business."

Discussing the idea with his Indigenous Youth Mobility Pathways (IYMP) mentor, Lucas applied to study the Certificate IV in Entrepreneurship and New Business (BSB40320) at TAFE Queensland.

IYMP helps young Indigenous people who move away from home find pathways into vocational training, tertiary study or apprenticeships.

"IYMP introduced me to TAFE Queensland's Small Business Solutions Mentor, Alice Langford, who runs the entrepreneurship course."

Enrolling in 2022, Lucas enjoyed the hands-on learning environment that helped him gain the skills

and knowledge needed to develop his business.

The more he studied, the more he could see how to bring his business idea to life commercially and sustainably.

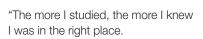
"Alice also helped me apply for and receive an Arts Queensland Grant, which got me down to the Melbourne Fashion Festival."

"Meeting and discussing my business with a wide range of creative industry experts, developing my understanding of my own artistic direction, and empowering myself and my brand, broadened the horizons for where I can take things with my art in the future."

After completing the course, Lucas had the skills and confidence to launch and operate his business, Musu Arts, specialising in First Nations art and apparel, with industry connections to help him take it to new levels

"Alice taught me to develop my brand and business strategy, how to put together budgets and a SWOT analysis, and she also introduced me to a local creative designer, Kerry Xynias."

"Through this connection, I'm learning about using creativity to design and make garments.



"I was developing my Indigenous art business plan throughout the course and knew it would bring my idea to life."

Launching Musu Arts, Lucas now specialises in bringing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art designs to life using new and traditional mediums to express his culture creatively and innovatively.

"Growing up in Darwin, I was always surrounded by a mix of different cultures, but most importantly. my own," he said.

"I'm connected to the Torres Strait Islands and the Pilbara through my grandparents, and that cultural connection has had a massive influence on my life.

"I want to express my culture through art and design to connect with all people creatively."

Still living in
Brisbane,
Lucas stays
connected to his
culture by keeping
close to the robust First
Nations community around Meanjin,
practising traditional and
contemporary art.

As a member of Brisbane's Ngali Kaymelan Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dance troupe, he performs traditional songs and dances and makes vital connections.

Now a graduate with a solid foundation of business skills, Lucas has also returned to studying engineering part-time while slowly growing Musu Arts.

"I'm approaching life with the view that anything you set out to do is achievable, and I hope to convey the pieces of knowledge of my family through Musu to the world," Lucas said.

"Engineering will always provide a career, but I honestly see myself as a full-time artist.

"I want to positively express my culture, which is the culture of this land, to inspire others creatively.

"Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander art is one of the oldest art forms known to man and has an 80,000year legacy in Australia.

"I have the creativity of my ancestors within me, and I want to use graphic

design, art commissions, fashion and large art installations to bring my culture to life and contribute to that legacy.

"I'm working to create a career that allows me to express myself, and thanks to TAFE Queensland, I know how to achieve that."



Scan the QR code to listen to Lucas' My Study Journey podcast episode.

CONNECTING CULTURES

Stacy Walters, an inspiring TAFE Queensland educator, has dedicated her life to empowering Indigenous communities through education.

After completing RATEP, a First Nations community-based primary education and early childhood education program, and experiencing first-hand the positive impact the training has on communities, Stacy decided to become a RATEP teacher.

"Every person that comes into my vision or into my class or into my heart, they are bringing me knowledge. I'm bringing them knowledge as well, so it's two-way sharing, two-way learning, and we plot beside each other."



Scan the QR code to listen to Stacy's My Study Journey podcast episode.





Brendan Larcombe defied all odds to turn his life around after falling into drug and alcohol addiction.

Brendan, a proud Goreng Goreng man, went on to complete qualifications in sports and fitness, as well as community services at TAFE Queensland.

He now uses his experience of being at rock bottom to help encourage and support others to live healthy, meaningful lives.

"I wouldn't have got to where I got to if I didn't come to TAFE. I think something as strong and powerful as Indigenous culture here in Australia will never die – it's too strong, it's in everything, its everywhere that we look and it's beautiful. My life now is a fairy tale from the life I had."



Scan the QR code to listen to Brendan's My Study Journey podcast episode.

BREAKING THE BARRIER

After a lifetime of hurdles and being told she wasn't good enough, Rebecca Cohen has taken control of her education and hopes her story inspires others who might also be struggling.

s a child, Rebecca had a hard A time at school.

"A lot of people, especially the teachers, would push me harder and harder, and they really couldn't understand why I couldn't keep up with a lot of the other kids," she said.

Rebecca was eventually diagnosed with dyslexia but said, when she was younger, there was very little support in classrooms to help children with learning disabilities.

"My career advisor at the time told me that the only thing I could achieve in life was to be a checkout girl." Rebecca said.

"I left school early because I couldn't progress like everybody else.

"I still wanted to strive for perfection but I didn't have anyone to help me get there - it felt like people didn't care."

Rebecca said her early learning experience impacted the direction of her life.

"I had a terrible outlook on myself, I didn't have much confidence and confidence affects mental health and physical health."

Rebecca identifies as Aboriginal on her Father's side, but she grew up with no connection to her culture that left her wondering who she was.

"When I was younger, I didn't even know that I was Indigenous, it was confusing growing up."

"My great grandmother came from the Bulgandramine Mission in New South Wales.

"I went and did a bit of my own research and it was like etching out the tip of an iceberg."

Rebecca said learning about where her ancestors are from and what they went through was the shot in the arm she needed to find her path.

"When you're proud of your heritage you start feeling proud of yourself - it's a beautiful thing," Rebecca said.

Learning more about her identity improved her confidence and Rebecca went on to complete Year 10 before enrolling at TAFE Queensland.

Rebecca gained a Certificate III in Community Services

(CHC32015) and had such a positive learning experience at TAFE Queensland that she decided to pursue further studies and enrolled in a Certificate IV in Youth Work (CHC40413).

"I believe everyone has a right to justice – social justice is very, very important."

"There are people in the community who never get seen, who never get heard, and if you can help someone in some way, why not?"

Rebecca, 49, said it's never too late to pursue your passion and enrol in training.

"There were many times I thought, 'Oh goodness, I can't get through this, I can't do it,' I had to keep pushing myself and believing in myself."



Scan the QR code to listen to Rebecca's My Study Journey podcast episode.



BEN'S PLUMBING GREATER DEPTHS OF SUCCESS

Following in the family trade is nothing new. What is unusual about father-son duo Phil and Ben Hughes, is that it is dad who is following in his son's boot prints to achieve the same qualifications and work in the family business.

Ben, a proud Turrbul and Yuggera man and father of two girls, completed his plumbing apprenticeship training at TAFE Queensland more than a decade ago and went on to build his business, **Hughes Plumbing**, which has over 2200 clients on the books.

Always one to challenge himself, Ben followed this up a few years later by going on to complete the Certificate IV in Plumbing and Services (CPC40920) and Restricted Electrical Licence (REL) Skill Set (SSUEE0010).

"I really enjoyed my previous TAFE Queensland studies and I chose to do the short course (Skill Set) at TAFE Queensland this time around, not only because I'm engaged with ongoing learning and development but also because I wanted to upskill on a different level while gaining another qualification," Ben said.

"This course is a perfect combo of online and in-class learning that's supported by great and very experienced teachers, which suits a business owner and busy dad like me down to a tee."

Ben said working safely is his biggest priority.

"It's really important that we do this job safely and properly and that's another reason I highly recommend this short course," Ben said.

"We work in such a geographically diverse area that we have to have this skill, as sparkies aren't always readily available, especially in rural and remote places.

"Without this qualification, our customers would have to engage a third party to hook up their hot water system."



Phil was so impressed by his son's experience at TAFE Queensland that he also joined the growing ranks of aspiring plumbers training at the **Nambour campus**.

Phil has completed his own **Certificate III in Plumbing** (CPC32420) and, like Ben, is also strengthen his qualification by undertaking additional training with TAFE Queensland.

"It's been pretty special watching Ben grow from a little person to someone who's now doing really well running his own business and looking after our customers while helping me," Phil said. "What I really like about our job is the trust that our customers place in us to help them fix whatever problem they have and for me, that is a real privilege."

Ben encourages people of all ages to consider a career in plumbing.

"It's a job that offers variety, technical and creative problem solving, and plenty of customer service and relationship building," Ben said.

"The icing on the cake is that I get to work with Dad doing what I love and at the same time being able to support him the way he supported me."





TROPHIES FOR TOP STUDENTS

Congratulations to TAFE Queensland's regional and state 2023 QUEENSLAND TRAINING AWARD winners.









Luke Handley

Shaniqua Burke

Jessica Addo Kyezaya Namai-Sabatino

Luke Handley

North Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year

Luke completed his Certificate II in Civil Construction (RII20720) with the Whitsunday Regional Council roads and drainage division through TAFE Queensland. Luke chose the industry to help his community of Proserpine and has developed immense pride in his work. The traineeship involved learning tool handling, concreting, road construction and other skills. Luke's previous leadership roles and commitment to rugby league have inspired him to become a teacher and role model for other Indigenous students.

Shaniqua Burke

Tropical North Queensland and State Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year

Shaniqua Burke completed a Certificate III in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (HLT30113) at TAFE Queensland to give back to her community. Shaniqua gained knowledge and skills in basic healthcare, screening processes, and advocating for community member rights and needs. Working with Apunipima Cape York Health Council, Shaniqua is excited to be supporting a social prescribing trial this year, the first ever to be led by an Aboriginal health worker in Australia.

Jessica Addo

Tropical North Queensland and State Vocational Student of the Year

Jessica Addo wanted to work in education after getting involved in her daughter's learning as she started school. After completing two Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education qualifications through RATEP at TAFE Queensland, Jessica now works as a PCYC outside school hours care manager and is studying for her Bachelor of Education. Jessica, who identifies as both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, wants to work in remote schools and make a positive change wherever she can.

Kyezaya Namai-Sabatino

Tropical North Queensland and State School-based Apprentice or Trainee of the Year

Kyezaya Namai-Sabatino is studying a Certificate II in Engineering (MEM20105) at TAFE Queensland while completing Year 12 at Western Cape College and undertaking an MRAEL school-based traineeship in diesel fitting with Rio Tinto. Kyezaya, who identifies as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander, has found working with heavy machinery to be fascinating. In the future, he hopes to increase his trade skills by gaining a diesel fitting and auto electrician dual apprenticeship.

NURUNDERI NURSING PROGRAM: LEARNING IN THE COMMUNITY, FOR THE COMMUNITY





In the heart of Wakka Wakka Country, the TAFE Queensland Nurunderi (Cherbourg) campus is providing more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with training opportunities to pursue careers in health.

Nurunderi is an Aboriginal word that means 'taught by great spirit', and campus coordinator Tabitha Bleys said TAFE Queensland is working with industry to meet demand for more health qualifications to be offered at the campus.

"We've certainly heard from both local health employers and from the community that there is demand for skilled health professionals, particularly for workers with Certificate III in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (HLT30113) level qualifications and higher," Tabitha said.

Fee-Free TAFE funding has helped remove financial barriers and has been instrumental in growing the Nurunderi nursing program in 2023.

The campus' first dedicated cohort of eight nursing students are engaging in their studies, gaining hands-on skills to pursue careers as enrolled nurses.

Local health organisations have welcomed the opportunity for workforce development, and are supporting their employees who are undertaking the full-time, 18-monthlong Diploma of Nursing (HLT54121).

"Some of our nursing students are already working for community health organisations or for Darling Downs Health, but were keen to expand their skills with a diploma qualification," Tabitha said.

"It's been wonderful to see their employers are committed to helping them to undertake this study opportunity and aid in their career progression once they've completed.

"The local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Medical Centre have also

advised of their interest in employing our nursing graduates - these students will certainly have lots of doors open in terms of job opportunities."

TAFE Queensland nursing educator Arlene Byrne leads the delivery of the nursing program at the Nurunderi campus.

"It's been great to see the engagement and interest from the students from the get-go," Arlene said.

"Some of the students already have certificate III health qualifications, which is a great place to start, that's how I started when I commenced my career in the industry.

"Our students are all passionate about ensuring members of the Cherbourg community have access to quality health services and advice.

"I'm excited to be a part of their journeys as they bring their new skills and knowledge into their roles in the local health service."





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