



FACING CANCER TOGETHER

**BUILDING A STRONGER FUTURE
FOR CANCER CARE IN THE NORTH**

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A HUB WITH HEART

CHAIR'S REPORT

Prof Scott Davis

This year has been one of transformation and resilience for COUCH, shaped by a shared belief in the power of community and the importance of local cancer care. As Chair, I am proud to reflect on the progress we've made, the challenges we've faced, and the unwavering support that continues to sustain us.

In 2025, we took a bold step forward with the transition from the COUCH Wellness Centre to the COUCH Cancer Hub NQ. This change represents more than a new name — it signals our evolution into the North's leading hub for integrated cancer care. Our mission is clear: to enhance the quality of life for the cancer-impacted community in Far North Queensland.

Building on the foundations established in recent years, the cancer hub continues to grow and evolve. We were proud to welcome Dr Helen Hobson, our first General Practitioner, whose appointment expands our holistic model of survivorship care. More clients than ever before are now accessing services across our allied health, exercise, nutrition, and wellbeing programs. Every new face reminds us of the vital role the cancer hub plays in helping people live well with and beyond cancer.

March 2025 marked the conclusion of transitional funding from the North Queensland Primary Health Network; their support since 2018 was essential to grow to where we are now. We thank the NQPHN for providing this fundamental funding stream. From March, COUCH became fully reliant on community and philanthropic support. We knew this would be a major turning point and our community rose to the challenge.

When we called for help, Far North Queensland responded with generosity and heart. It was our strongest year on record for donations and fundraising, excluding bequests. While we did not reach our \$1.5 million target, the outpouring of support reaffirmed the depth of connection our community feels for COUCH.

Special thanks go to The Mills Family Foundation, Kenfrost Homes, Calanna Whole Health Corner, The CaPTA Group, the District Lodge of Carpentaria, Northern Frontier Foundation and Dawsons Engineering for their extraordinary contributions.



We continue to advocate strongly for long-term funding and sustainability, supported by independent modelling that highlights the need for investment to secure our future. Despite the challenges ahead, our commitment remains steadfast. We will keep growing our services, supporting more people, and developing new partnerships to ensure COUCH endures for generations to come.

Next year marks 20 years of COUCH — two decades of advocacy, compassion, and impact. From leading the push that brought oncology treatment to Cairns in 2006 to providing thousands of vital support services each year, COUCH's journey reflects community spirit in action. Together, we are shaping the future of cancer care in the North.



DESIRE TO HELP OTHERS DRIVES PHYSIO

CHAIR'S AWARD



Physio Tom Maher is one of the special ingredients in the mix that makes COUCH Cancer Hub NQ so effective in improving cancer clients' quality of life.

The Cairns Total Physio director has volunteered his services since it opened in 2019 and was named the recipient of the 2024 COUCH Chair's Award.

"I'm very humbled," Mr Maher said.

"To win any award is special but it's particularly humbling because it's COUCH."

Mr Maher grew up playing sport with Peter Woodward whose parents, Pip and the late Charles, were the driving force behind COUCH.

When approached to be part of the organisation, he "jumped" at the opportunity.

Like so many others, Mr Maher said he had family members affected by cancer and therefore felt it was a way for him to help others.

A loving husband and dedicated father of three energetic children, Mr Maher is also the lead physio for the Cairns Taipans, the city's NBL team.

COUCH chairperson Prof Scott Davis praised Mr Maher's generosity and dedication to the organisation despite his own hectic schedule.

"COUCH is fortunate to work with many talented specialists who make a difference in the lives of people who have been touched by cancer," Prof Davis said.

"Tom volunteers his time and skills selflessly and we see the positive impact he makes every day, not just professionally but on a personal level also.

"We appreciate everything he does here at COUCH."

Mr Maher said the cancer hub, with its integrative oncology services, advice, education and social interaction, was valuable once cancer treatment finished as many people felt in limbo.



Being able to help people through the (cancer treatment) process is really important to me.

Dr Helen Hobson, COUCH Cancer Hub NQ GP



I've been very privileged to be at people's side when times have been very difficult. It's a beautiful job.

Emma Bettini, Cancer Care Nurse



I'm really focused on making people feel great by the time they walk out the door.

Paula Langford, Oncology massage therapist



MOMENTUM BUILDS

OFF ROUNDTABLE

Advocacy has been a key focus in the past 12 months, heightened by the cessation of NQPHN funding in March.

There was great momentum off the back of the 2024 Champions of COUCH Christmas campaign and in the lead-up to the 2025 Federal Election.

A Future of COUCH Roundtable brought together MPs, health, business and civic leaders to unite behind a clear message: the need for \$7.5 million in core funding over five years to assist the COUCH Cancer Hub NQ as it transitions to a self-sustainable operation.

The roundtable was an important event and provided several key learnings.

They included:

- » The brand had slipped from view and we needed to better convey what we do
- » The importance of referrals and relationships from within the health sector
- » Our name - COUCH Wellness Centre - was ambiguous
- » There was strong connection to COUCH and the need for it in the region
- » Overwhelming support to see COUCH succeed

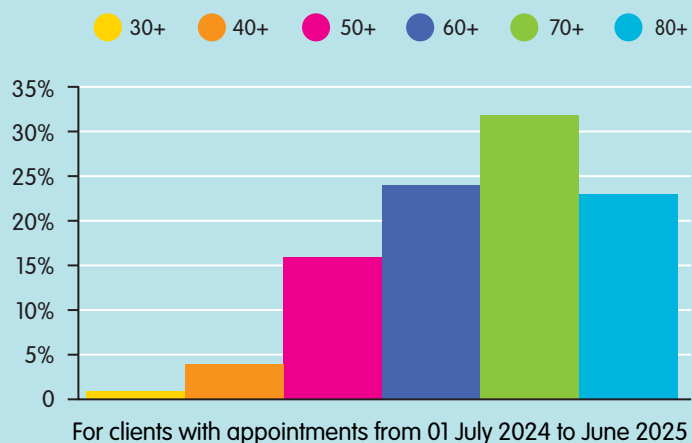
This feedback has underpinned much of our work since it was held in March.

While there was no election "gift", outgoing Leichhardt MP Warren Entsch and his successor, Matt Smith, visited the hub in July in a rare show of political collaboration. Mr Smith expressed his support for COUCH and a desire to help, which offers some hope as we continue to work with the Labor Government to secure future funding.

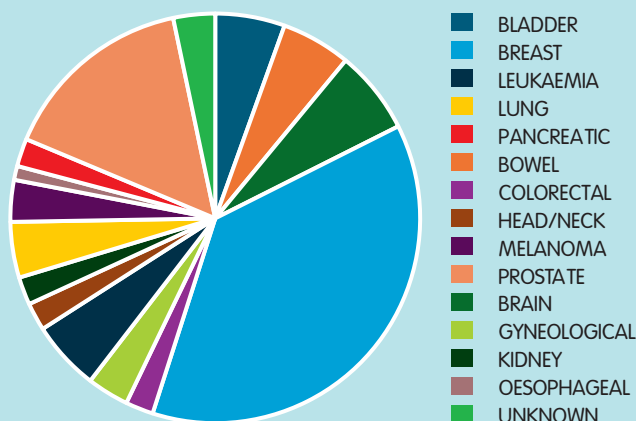
Mayor Amy Eden, major Far North advocacy groups, Advance Cairns and the Cairns Chamber of Commerce, have been vocal in their support of COUCH both locally and within parliament walls in Canberra.



CLIENT DEMOGRAPHICS REPORT



TREATMENT BY CANCER TYPE



TELLING THE UNIQUE STORIES OF COUCH

This year marked a new era for COUCH with the launch of COUCH Cancer Hub NQ, a name that better reflects our focus on cancer care. The refreshed brand and logo were shared through traditional and social media, with strong community support and great feedback - it simply makes sense to have "cancer" in our name.

A new marketing focus and social media strategy has resulted in outstanding results defined by strong growth, higher engagement and consistent performance.

Increased consistency in posting, cross-platform content alignment and an emphasis on telling the stories of the many different "faces of COUCH" contributed to significant year-on-year gains in reach, impressions, engagement, and follower growth across Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn.

Visibility also expanded through a \$150,000 in-kind sponsorship with Bishopp Outdoor Advertising, featuring digital billboards across Cairns and North Queensland.

A special thank you must go to the Far North's traditional media who stepped up their support of COUCH assisting in raising awareness and campaigning for funding.

Together, all these initiatives strengthen our presence and deepen our impact.



CARING FOR OUR CLIENTS

Concentration on referral pathways and marketing of our specialised cancer support services has led to an 11 per cent increase in total episodes of care delivered year on year. The Care Team has worked vigorously to expand and strengthen our referral pathways through networking, targeted marketing and hub tours and their efforts are delivering strong results.

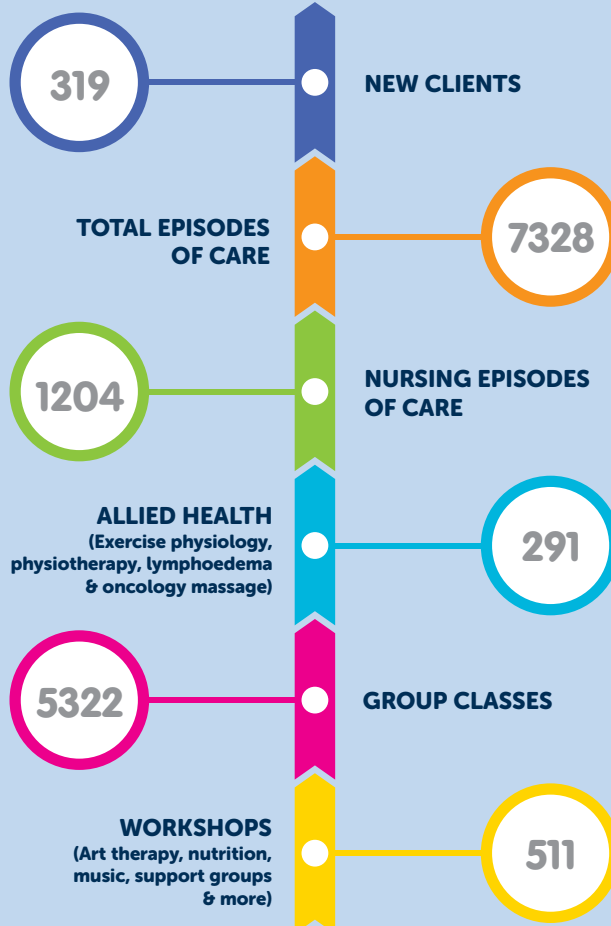
We would like to take the opportunity to thank the numerous local GPs and specialists along with oncology teams at ICON, Liz Plummer Cancer Care Centre, Cancer Council Queensland, McGrath Breast Nurses, IMS/Far North Day Hospital and Northern Urology.

Our reputation as a trusted cancer care hub has been further enhanced through a series of specialist guest speaker events, which attracted strong community interest. These free sessions featured radiation oncologists Dr Ariyanto Pramana and nurse practitioner Marco Hake, who presented on prostate cancer.

In June, we welcomed GP Dr Helen Hobson as part of our transition to a GP-led model of care, an important step in providing coordinated, holistic support for clients throughout their cancer journey. Consultations have been well received, with highly positive feedback. We also expanded our clinical services to include lymphoedema massage.

Thanks to grants from Queensland Country Bank and Powerlink, we continued to deliver free wellness workshops in nutrition, music and art therapy, complementing our allied health services and introducing a new Stay Strong exercise program.

CLIENT DATA



CLIENT QUOTES



The doctors and nurses at Cairns Hospital saved my life but COUCH has given me my life back.

Hayley Gillespie



It's not only all their services, you meet people who are in a similar boat as you - a bit worse or a lot worse than you - and that's helped.

Robert Soderberg



It gives you a chance to meet other people, have somewhere to feel supported like you're not the only one going through this.

Georgia Barrett

Blood, sweat & cheers IN THE NAME OF COUCH



COUCH returned to grassroots community engagement for this year's Cairns Airport IRONMAN Cairns and was rewarded with its biggest field ever in the COUCH Charity Fun Run's history.

A total of 376 runners, more than double last year's number, participated in raising almost \$5000, a 204 percent increase on the previous year. It was a truly amazing morning as the Cairns Esplanade was inundated with competitors of all ages and abilities, awash with colour, and all running in the name of COUCH.

More than 20 athletes took on the serious IRONMAN challenge with this year's event raising almost \$20,000. Although a smaller number competed than in previous years, this cohort was some of our strongest fundraisers ever.





The IRONMAN 70.3 Cairns partnership is a shining example of community rallying together and projecting a healthy message.

Other major fundraisers included the ever-popular Bulls Masters luncheon and golf day (\$21,500) while our friends at Smithfield Dental carried on their tremendous commitment to COUCH this year raising more than \$5000 through their "Clean for a Cure" fundraiser. They have now raised more than \$70,000 for COUCH through this initiative.

A garden Tea Party at St Monica's College was heartfelt with senior student and former COUCH client Georgia Barrett, and current client Kate Thompson, invited to speak. The event raised \$6600, with another \$5000 donated by an attendee.

Fundraising efforts at the Rotary West Trivia Night (\$13,000) in February and the NQ Burnouts' "Skids for Santa" event, at which Mulgrave Motors matched the ticket sales to contribute a total of \$15,000, proved the region was happy to use both brains and engine muscle to raise money for COUCH.

We acknowledge and thank Cairns Amateurs and Cairns Jockey Club for their incredible partnership. And say "cheers" to those who attended the Gordon's Pink Gin High Tea event helping to raise more than \$12,000.

The Tour de Cure proved there are superpowers in Lycra, donating an incredible \$20,000 as they pedalled through Cairns and the Tablelands.

At Cairns Airport's CARA Awards 2024, donors glammed up and slammed down more than \$12,000.

We have been humbled by the outpouring of support we have received from the community since launching the Champions of COUCH campaign and acknowledge every fundraising effort from golf days and trivia nights to morning teas and luncheons, dedicated to helping those impacted by cancer.



A loyal and DEDICATED ARMY

COUCH PAYS HOMAGE TO ITS ARMY OF COMMITTED AND LOYAL VOLUNTEERS

Together they notched up 4246 hours of service to the organisation in 2023-24 – the equivalent of two full-time staff.

Strategically, volunteers have been directed to where they can be most effective.

There has been a total of 2895 hours spent working in the cafe, a 393 percent rise compared to last year highlighting the increased traffic through this commercial space. Special mention goes to our long-standing gardening, maintenance and centre support volunteers; they keep the hub functional, tidy, and welcoming for everyone who walks through the doors. Their dedication behind the scenes ensures the grounds are beautiful, the facilities run smoothly, and the cancer hub remains a calm and uplifting place for clients, staff, and visitors.

Meanwhile, volunteer hours spent at events and fundraisers rose from 36 to 146 in 2024. They have made coffee, flipped burgers, hosted trivia and hydrated athletes.


There has been a focus on ensuring volunteers are exposed to a range of duties that are not only essential but fulfilling.

Without our volunteers, we simply couldn't do what we do.



VOLUNTEER CONTRIBUTIONS

ACTIVITY CATEGORY	HOURS	VOLUNTEERS
ADMINISTRATION	310	7
CENTRE SUPPORT	895	22
CAFE SUPPORT	2895	5
EVENTS & FUNDRAISING	146	5

 **4246 HOURS IN TOTAL - VOLUNTEERS ARE 29% OF OUR WORKFORCE**





Champions answer URGENT CALL

The Champions of COUCH initiative was introduced to help achieve our \$1.5m annual fundraising goal, which is the amount required to ensure COUCH's ongoing financial sustainability and ability to deliver quality cancer care across the North.

A major marketing and media campaign was rolled out in November ahead of Christmas 2024 combining a call for new Champion donors with a focus on the looming conclusion of government funding.

The campaign received tremendous community and media support, led by our key media partner, the Cairns Post. Through emotive storytelling that shared the experiences of clients, health professionals and partners, the message of COUCH's impact reached a large and engaged audience.

One year on, there are 41 Champions - a mix of local businesses, community groups and individuals - contributing through cash and in-kind sponsorships. Their generosity is helping to sustain and expand vital cancer support services, with many already renewing or pledging their continued support for the year ahead.



If you're interested in becoming a Champion,
join us today by:
Phone: 40320820
Email: fundraising@couch.org.au



We salute our GUARDIAN ANGELS

COUCH has been overwhelmed by the generosity of the community in the face of economic headwinds.

Through philanthropic contributions to community events and donations, COUCH has recorded its strongest fundraising year on record – a staggering 98 percent rise against the previous year.

We acknowledge, honour and give our sincere thanks to the generous organisations businesses and individuals who support our mission.

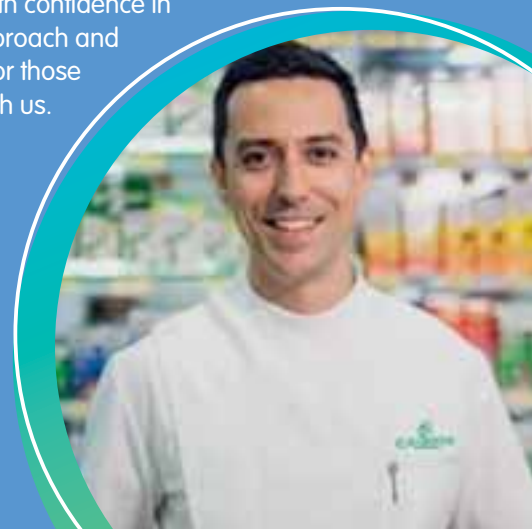
All have a strong belief in giving back to the community that supports them and keenly understand the ripple effect of cancer.

We are humbled by the Mills Family Foundation (\$120,000) and Kenfrost Homes' (\$100,000) staunch support of COUCH and their incredible contributions over the past 12 months. A heartfelt congratulations to Kenfrost owner and philanthropist John Richardson for being recognised with the Cairns Chamber of Commerce Business Excellence Legacy Award this year.

We also give special thanks to Calanna Whole Health Corner, The CaPTA Group, Northern Frontier Foundation, Dawsons Engineering and Gallaghers for their unwavering commitment to quality cancer care.

COUCH recognises its long-standing relationship with the Freemasons and lauds the District Lodge of Carpentaria's pledge to raise \$150,000 over two years along with its charity, Hand Heart Pocket.

As an organisation COUCH looks to the future with confidence in our approach and grateful for those who stand with us.



Foundations

SET FOR FUTURE



Through uncertainty in 2023-24 we look to the future with determination and commitment.

Behind a new name – COUCH Cancer Hub NQ - there is renewed purpose and passion.

COUCH approaches the new year confident the solid foundations laid in 2023-24 will hold us in good stead.

Clients, partners, sponsors, volunteers, staff and supporters have rallied behind us – our Champions remain committed.

Our simple focus – raising the funds to deliver excellent cancer care services and amplifying awareness so that more people have access to them – continues to drive momentum.

While there has been significant growth in client numbers and episodes of care, we acknowledge there is still much to do.

In service delivery, we plan to expand mental health and GP services, increase the number of cancer care nurses to meet demand, broaden existing programs, strengthen telehealth capacity to reach rural and remote communities, deepen collaboration with government health organisations and partner with First Nations health providers.

It's important to continue to listen to our community, clients and partners about what they need from the hub and to deliver.

Our goal for the next 12 months is to leverage community support and ramp up fundraising with better resourcing and a strategic plan. Our 20th anniversary in 2026 provides an excellent opportunity to engage with the community.

We cannot just be a "hub" in name only and so with that in mind, we will further explore partnerships that not only help fund our services but ensure more people in our region affected by cancer have access to excellent wraparound oncology services.

There is much work to be done – our community depends on us.



STATEMENT OF FINANCIALS

STATEMENT OF PROFIT OR LOSS AND OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2025

	Note	2025 \$	2024 \$
REVENUE			
Grant income		249,405	524,696
Cancer hub trading revenue		103,168	89,874
Donations & fundraising received		838,304	426,545
Membership fees		328	320
Interest received		17,349	22,476
Other income		10,018	29,335
Total revenue		1,218,572	1,093,246
EXPENSES			
Cancer hub trading expenses		(58,881)	(97,579)
Consultancy fees		(47,688)	(33,254)
Fundraising expenses		(8,286)	(41,083)
Insurance		(39,615)	(43,231)
Wages and salaries		(680,488)	(702,136)
Superannuation		(77,954)	(79,635)
Depreciation		(126,938)	(147,690)
Amenities, repair and maintenances expenses		(49,264)	(44,288)
Other expenses		(48,012)	(78,606)
Total expenses		(1,137,127)	(1,267,502)
SURPLUS / (DEFICIT) BEFORE TAX		81,446	(174,256)
Income tax expense	2(a)		
Surplus / (deficit) after tax		81,446	(174,256)
OTHER COMPREHENSIVE INCOME			
Total comprehensive income / (loss) for the year		81,446	(174,256)

COUCH BOARD MEMBERS



Prof Scott Davis

Chairman since Nov 2022
Director since Jan 2022

- » Executive Director of the Tropical Australian Academic Health Centre (TAAHC)
- » Founder and Managing Director of Well Balanced Care



Vanessa Maruna

Deputy Chair
Director since 2020

- » Partner in national law firm Sparke Helmore



Vicky Johnston

Treasurer since 2019

- » Chief Financial Officer/ Commercial Manager for the IMS Group



Michael Woodward

Secretary since 2014

- » Operations and Projects Director for The CaPTA Group



Toni Sisson

Director since June 2023

- » Project manager for Torres and Cape Hospital



Daniel Hughes

Director since June 2023

- » Experienced CEO and director. Most recently CEO AJ Hackett International



Nick Loukas

Director since October 2024

- » Managing Director of Vitality Pharmacy Warehouse Group
- » Adjunct Associate Professor JCU College of Medicine and Dentistry



Manu John

Director since June 2025

- » Executive Director Strategy and Investment at Torres and Cape Hospital and Health Service (TCHHS)

WAYS TO SUPPORT US

To support COUCH you can provide financial contributions, participate in and/or organise fundraising events, volunteer your time, assist with marketing and promotion activities, form strategic partnerships, advocate for our cause, help with grant writing, facilitate educational workshops and more.

Email: fundraising@couch.org.au

STAY CONNECTED

COUCH (Cairns Organisation United for Cancer Health)
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Tel: (07) 4032 0820
Email: admin@couch.org.au
www.couch.org.au

Let's champion Courage

Cancer can be daunting

Cancer takes a toll not just on the body but on the heart and spirit. Let's stand beside those impacted by cancer helping to inspire them to transform fear into determination and uncertainty into strength.



Champions of COUCH

Join us to make a difference

Become a Champion of COUCH and for just \$2700 a year - about the cost of a daily cup of coffee - you can help us build a future of comprehensive care for FNQ locals impacted by cancer.

Join us today

 **4032 0820**

champions@couch.org.au

FACING CANCER TOGETHER

WE'RE HERE TO SUPPORT YOU



COUCH
Cancer Hub NQ

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