



ANNUAL REPORT 2024/2025

THE PEAK PROFESSIONAL
BODY FOR THE REMOTE AND
ISOLATED HEALTH WORKFORCE

crana.org.au

CONTENTS

CEO's Report	2
Chair's Report	4
Board of Directors	7
About us	
Organisational Structure	8
CRANplus Strategic Plan	9
First Peoples' Strategy	10
Representation on External Committees	12
Membership	14
Media & Publications	16
Reports	
Education Services	18
Mental Health & Wellbeing Services	22
Professional Services	26
Financial Report	30
CRANplus Directory	34



CRANplus acknowledges the Traditional Owners and Custodians of the land, waters and sky, and respects their enduring spiritual connection to Country. We acknowledge the sorrow of the past and our hope and belief that we can move to a place of equity, partnership and justice together. We acknowledge Elders past, present and emerging, and pay our respects to the cultural authority of First Peoples.

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Above: William – stock.adobe.com

CEO'S REPORT



Dear Members and Stakeholders,

It is my privilege to present this year's CEO Report, reflecting on a year that has seen CRANplus strengthen its foundations, deliver meaningful outcomes for the remote health workforce, and take bold steps towards modernising the way we operate.

Our people and organisational development

In 2024/2025, CRANplus undertook a comprehensive organisational review to ensure the organisation is well-positioned for long-term sustainability. This process led to the establishment of three core divisions:

- Clinical Education – continuing to deliver sector-leading training programs;
- Member Services and Workforce Support – uniting Professional Services, Mental Health and Wellbeing, and the Bush Support Line, enabling a stronger and more connected approach to advocacy and care;
- Corporate Services – strengthening governance, finance, and operational systems.

We are also proud to launch the role of Chief Remote Area Nurse, a position designed to amplify the voice of the workforce and champion innovation in practice.

Our new Strategic Plan, launching in 2026, will guide us in building a resilient, inclusive organisation that supports and strengthens the remote and isolated health workforce well into the future.

First Peoples' Strategy

CRANplus continues its commitment to our First Peoples' Strategy, championing Cultural Safety across all areas of our work and positioning it as a guiding principle in how we lead, serve, and advocate. This commitment is reflected in First Peoples' participation in our courses, which exceeded national workforce benchmarks, and in the delivery of our Wellbeing Workshops, half of which were in partnership with Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs).

Education

Our education program remains a cornerstone of CRANplus, with 105 courses delivered across all states and territories in 2024/2025, supporting more than 2,000 health professionals and achieving a 97% satisfaction rate with a Net Promoter Score of 84. We expanded flagship offerings such as the Triage Emergency Care Course (Intensive), continued to apply our quality improvement framework to our education products, and began the transition to our new CANVAS learning management system.

Mental Health and Wellbeing

In 2024/2025, our Mental Health and Wellbeing program continued to provide a critical service to those living and working in remote and isolated communities, strengthening its reputation as a leading provider of trusted and culturally responsive support services. Our 24-hour Bush Support Line continued to provide support to rural and remote clinicians and their families, while thousands of Members and stakeholders benefited from wellbeing packs, Mindful Monday newsletters, digital resources, and tailored workshops – many delivered in collaboration with First Peoples communities and Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations.

Professional Services and Membership

Our Professional Services division continued to amplify the voices of the remote workforce. Publications such as the *CRANplus Magazine* (22,000 copies distributed) and weekly *CRANApulse* newsletters reached a broad audience, while our Annual Conference in Melbourne in October 2024 attracted strong participation and sector recognition.

Our Membership base remained stable at more than 2,000, with increasing engagement from younger health professionals. Guided by Member surveys and roundtables, we ensured our education, advocacy, and support programs remain relevant and responsive to the changing needs of our Members and stakeholders. Of particular note was our pre-budget submission calling for a postgraduate, nationally recognised, rural and remote generalist nursing and midwifery program built on the key pillars of cultural and clinical capability.

Looking ahead

Looking ahead, CRANplus will continue to embed our new organisational structure, deliver the final phases of the Digital Uplift Project, continue to develop the Chief Remote Area Nurse role, strengthen our First Peoples' Strategy and grow our education and wellbeing programs. Our new Strategic Plan, launching in 2026, will guide us in building a resilient, inclusive organisation that supports and strengthens the remote and isolated health workforce well into the future.

Thank you

I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to the Commonwealth Department of Health, Disability and Ageing for their generous grant funding, which enables CRANplus to continue its vital work supporting the remote and isolated health workforce. I would also like to express my deep appreciation for the hard work, dedication and ongoing support of the CRANplus Chair, Deputy Chair and Board.

Thank you to our staff and volunteers, your passion and expertise are the heartbeat of CRANplus. And above all, to our Members – thank you for your trust and commitment. Your voices shape our direction and your work inspires everything we do.

Together, we will continue building a resilient, sustainable and culturally safe remote health workforce that stands ready to meet tomorrow's challenges.

Emma Barrett
Acting Chief Executive Officer
CRANplus



CHAIR'S REPORT



Dear Members and Stakeholders,

On behalf of the Board, I am pleased to present the Chair's Report for 2024/2025. This year has been one of transformation and renewal for CRANplus, as we have worked to strengthen our governance foundations, supported significant organisational change, and continued to work in the best interests of our valued Members and stakeholders. I extend my sincere thanks to our Members, partners, and the Commonwealth Department of Health, Disability and Ageing for their ongoing support, and to our staff, volunteers, and my Board colleagues for their unwavering commitment to the CRANplus mission.

Since its founding in 1983, CRANplus has worked to improve the health and wellbeing of people living in remote and isolated communities by supporting the health professionals who serve them. Guided by our vision of equitable access to high-quality and culturally safe health care for all Australians, we remain focused on advocacy, education, and support that is responsive to the unique challenges of remote practice across Australia.

Highlights

At a governance level, the Board oversaw a number of important developments this year. These included an organisational review, the introduction of the inaugural Chief Remote Area Nurse role – to ensure the workforce has a strong voice at the national level, and the continued implementation of our overarching digital strategy.

The Board also supported the transition of head-office functions to Adelaide, recognising the opportunities this provides for operational effectiveness and engagement with national stakeholders. Importantly, we maintained our focus on stewardship and accountability, ensuring CRANplus is well-positioned to meet both its constitutional objectives and its Commonwealth grant commitments.

Challenges and opportunities

We are mindful of the external pressures facing the sector, including the rising costs of delivering services and the need to ensure education and support services remain both affordable and accessible. At the same time, we see great opportunity in innovation, particularly through technology-enabled learning, stronger Cultural Safety initiatives, and the growing engagement of the next generation of remote health professionals.

In January 2025, the Board launched a Digital Strategy to guide the adoption and use of technology over the next five years. This strategic framework aims to ensure the use of technology is applied in a way that enhances Member services, strengthens organisational resilience, and supports our long-term sustainability.

Financial performance

In 2024/2025, CRANplus achieved a strong revenue outcome, supported by the commercialisation of the Cairns office and continued demand for our education programs. While rising service delivery costs placed pressure on the bottom line, prudent management and investment in modern systems ensured we remained in a stable financial position.

Governance and leadership

This year marked CRANplus' first as a Company Limited by Guarantee, a significant milestone that enhances our credibility and reputation, strengthens governance and accountability, and provides national legal standing under federal law, positioning the organisation for long-term sustainability and growth.

I would like to express my thanks for the service of outgoing Directors John Wright (Chair, July–November 2024), Fiona Wake, and Dr Nicholas Williams (Treasurer). I also extend my gratitude to Danielle Causer for her contributions as both a Director and as Deputy Chair.

I would like to acknowledge the ongoing work of Directors Naomi Zaro, Josh Stafford, and Kate Welleman, as well as Joe Cristaldi, Advisor to the Board and Chair of the Audit and Risk Subcommittee. I also thank Emma Barratt for her service as Deputy Chair and for stepping into the role of Acting CEO from December 2024. The Board has commenced a recruitment process for a permanent CEO to lead the organisation into its next phase.

The leadership of Ms Linda Kensington, who resigned as CEO in June 2025, is acknowledged with appreciation, as is the work of outgoing Executive Directors of First Peoples' Strategy, Dallas McKeown and Sue Torney, whose efforts have helped to strengthen Cultural Safety within the organisation.

The Board appreciates the continued funding support provided by the Commonwealth Department of Health, Disability and Ageing. Their partnership remains vital to our ongoing work.

I also acknowledge our current Executive Leadership Team – Emma Woodhouse (General Manager – Clinical Education), David Derrick (CFO/General Manager – Corporate Services), and Kristy Hill (General Manager – Member Services and Workforce Support) – for their dedication and leadership.

To our more than 100 volunteers, your knowledge and expertise remain critical to the success of our organisation. I also wish to thank our Members: your trust, commitment, and lived experiences ensure CRANplus continues to be shaped by, and for, the remote health workforce.

Looking ahead

In 2025/2026, the Board's focus will be on guiding the implementation of CRANplus' refreshed Strategic Plan to 2030. Priorities include further embedding Cultural Safety across all aspects of our work, advancing advocacy for workforce sustainability and overseeing the completion of the Digital Uplift Project. Backed by robust leadership and clear direction, CRANplus remains firmly committed to advocating for and supporting Australia's remote and isolated health professionals.

CRANplus remains guided by its values of Integrity, Social Justice, Excellence, Respect, Inclusiveness, Accountability, and Safety. With strong governance foundations and a clear long-term strategy, I am confident that CRANplus will continue to grow its influence, strengthen the remote health workforce, and contribute to better health outcomes for remote and isolated communities across Australia.

Warm Regards,

Dr Ann Aitken RN, PhD
Chair
CRANplus Board of Directors



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BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Current



Dr Ann Aitken RN, PhD
Board Chair
(from November 2024)
Board Member



Danielle Causier
Deputy Chair
(from December 2024)
Board Member



Naomi Zaro
Board Member



Josh Stafford
Board Member
(from November 2024)



Kate Welleman
Board Member
(from November 2024)



Joe Cristaldi
Advisor to the Board

Outgoing



John Wright
Board Chair
(until November 2024)



Emma Barritt
Deputy Chair
(until December 2024)



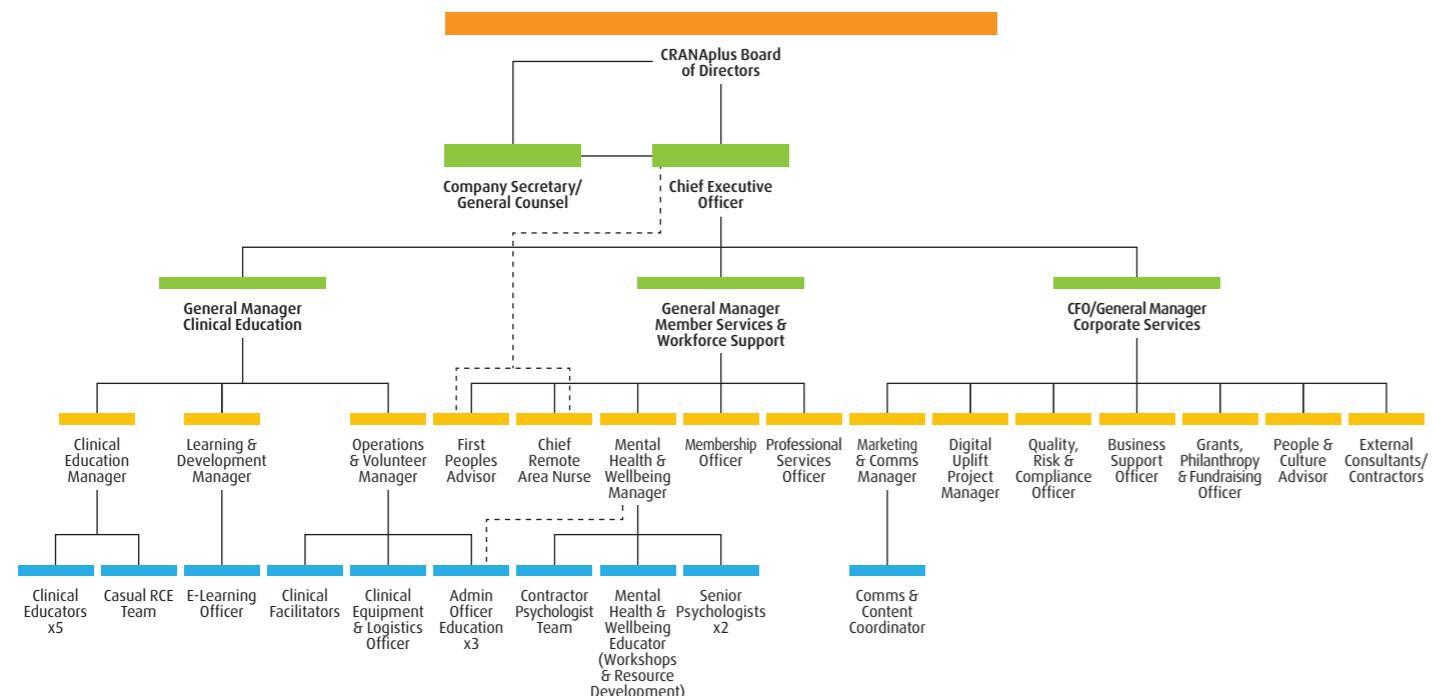
Dr Nicholas Williams
Treasurer
(until November 2024)



Fiona Wake
Board Member
(until November 2024)

ABOUT US

Organisational Structure



Our Mission

To represent, support and educate the remote and isolated health workforce to promote the development and delivery of safe, high-quality health care.

Our Values

- Integrity
- Social Justice
- Excellence
- Respect
- Inclusiveness
- Accountability
- Safety



ABOUT US



First Peoples' Strategy

CRANplus remains deeply committed to embedding Cultural Safety across all aspects of our work through the First Peoples' Strategy, 2020–2025. This year marked both the continued delivery of key initiatives and the commencement of a review process to shape the 2025–2030 Strategy, ensuring it reflects evolving priorities and strengthens services in partnership with First Peoples communities.

We worked closely with First Peoples peak bodies, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, and partners to support the remote and isolated health workforce, including promoting scholarships and pathways for First Peoples. We were proud to celebrate and highlight the journeys of First Peoples' health professionals through CRANplus publications and at our Annual Conference in October 2024. A particular highlight was the conference presentation delivered by Melina Connors, Australia's inaugural First Nations Midwifery Director, Registered Midwife, and proud Gurindji woman. Ms Connors shared her experience leading the implementation of the *Growing Deadly Families Strategy*, providing important reflections on leadership and cultural responsiveness in midwifery and maternal health.

Importantly, First Peoples participants accounted for 5.6% of all course enrolments – well above national workforce benchmarks – demonstrating our continued success in providing inclusive, culturally safe learning environments. We are proud to have continued our partnership with and undertaken block course bookings from organisations such as Central Australian Aboriginal Congress, Sunrise Health Service, Katherine West Health Board, Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services, and Miwatj Health.

In May 2025, the CRANplus Education team launched a dedicated Cultural Safety Project to strengthen our commitment to inclusive and respectful learning environments across all face-to-face workshops. This initiative reaffirms our zero-tolerance stance on racism and reflects our Values, the First Peoples' Strategy, and the legislated expectation that all health professionals understand and embed the principles of Cultural Safety into their practice. By embedding Cultural Safety, celebrating the heritage and lived experience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, and equipping facilitators to eliminate cultural bias, this project ensures every participant feels safe, respected, and valued.

Looking forward, with the strong leadership of Aboriginal Health Practitioner Naomi Zaro, a proud Meriam (Dauareb) woman, on the CRANplus Board, and more than 120 Members identifying as First Peoples, CRANplus will continue to champion the voices and experiences of First Peoples working in remote and isolated health care as well as ensuring that Cultural Safety is at the very forefront of everything that we do.

Above from left: Culture is the focus at the Yutjuwala Djiiwarr aged care centre in Nhulunbuy in north-east Arnhem Land; Registered Nurse and Midwife Lesley Woolf, Executive Health Manager – Health, Aged Care & Community Services at Mal'a'la Health Service Aboriginal Corporation in Maningrida says Aboriginal community-controlled health services are the way of the future; Melina Connors, First Nations Midwifery Director, Queensland Health, presenting at the CRANplus 2024 Remote Nursing and Midwifery Conference.

Our Vision

To be the leading experts supporting the remote and isolated health workforce

Lift our voice to advocate for remote and isolated health

- Engage with peak bodies and key stakeholders on identified health issues.
- Develop and maintain mutually beneficial relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, communities, and organisations to support positive outcomes.
- Contribute to the Professional Learning sessions (webinars).

Through a strengths-based approach contribute to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who live in rural and remote Australia

- Increase engagement and advancement across cultural knowledge, cultural safety and recognition.
- Establish relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations to access resources that enable the delivery of CRANplus services.
- Develop a talent pool of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Facilitators for delivery of relevant education courses.

Respond to health impacts from social determinants and a changing climate

- Engage in research collaboratives and projects.
- Develop leadership to build cultural respect, reducing discrimination and racism.
- Increase meaningful representation of First Peoples' presence in our workplace to stay well-informed with current issues.
- Value and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' capacity to co design and deliver evidence-based programs and services with their communities.

Increase our competitiveness and strengthen our resources

- Be an organisation of choice for staff and volunteers and support a professional, flexible and mobile workforce.
- Review our services and applicability to First Peoples' requirements.
- Promote CRANplus to attract and retain more client business.

Grow, develop and up-skill the workforce

- Develop a proactive approach to identifying opportunities for First Peoples.
- Develop a Community of Practice forum for First Peoples members.
- Promote and leverage CRANplus' competitive edge in remote health training and provide advice on CRANplus promotional and educational material relating to First Peoples.
- Build cultural safety capabilities and practices through learning programs to cultivate understanding and respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures.

Our Mission

To represent, support and educate the remote and isolated health workforce to promote the development and delivery of safe, high-quality health care.

We respect the diversity and vibrancy of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and listen to worldviews from across the country. We recognise that First Peoples' traditions and knowledge systems are sources of strength, wisdom and guidance. We reflect First Peoples' culture in our workplace and in our work practices. This plan is a strategic roadmap that defines our future vision and how we will get there. It guides us in an organised, flexible and aligned manner for the delivery of our mandate. The vision and values will hold our organisation accountable in ensuring it efficiently and effectively supports First Peoples on their path to self-determination. We look forward to continuing our journey together.

Our Values • Integrity • Social Justice • Excellence • Respect • Inclusiveness • Accountability • Safety



ABOUT US

Representation on External Committees

Peak Body Membership

- Joint Nursing and Midwifery Peaks
- Nursing and Midwifery Strategic Reference Group Meeting (NMSRG)
- National Rural Health Alliance
- Coalition of National Nursing and Midwifery Organisations

Submissions

- AHPRA – Review of the National Prescribing Competencies Framework
- Notifiable diseases regulation consultation – communicable disease control branch of South Australia
- The Office of the National Rural Health Commissioner – Transition pathways for nurses
- Consultation – Health System Performance Assessment Framework 2025
- Submission to the Joint Select Committee on Northern Australia – Energy, food, and water security enquiry
- Department of Health, Disability and Ageing – Public consultation on an emergency mental health curriculum framework for undergraduate health degrees
- National Maternity Workforce Strategy: Consultation survey
- NMBA targeted consultation on the new proposed fact sheet: Information for nurses and midwives and practice in maternal, child and family health
- QLD Health – Review of the Departmental Standard: Secure storage of S8 medicines
- NMBA targeted consultation on the revised nurse practitioner registration standard and guidelines
- Updating endorsed midwives' prescribing mechanism in Victoria consultation
- National Allied Health Workforce Strategy
- National Roadmap to Improve the Health and Mental Health of Autistic People
- AHPRA draft guidance on professional capabilities public consultation
- AHPRA draft guidance on embedding good practice in clinical placements, simulation-based learning and virtual care in initial student health practitioner education
- AHPRA consultation on the review of the criminal history registration standard
- Draft National Nursing Workforce Strategy

- Nurse practitioner and midwife PBS prescribing survey
- Nurse practitioner prescribing unapproved medicines
- Office of the Inspector General of Aged Care review of the administration of My Aged Care
- Draft of Australia's ninth periodic CEDAW report

Consortiums

- National Multidisciplinary Primary Care Research, Policy and Advocacy Consortium

Consultations/Representations

- Department of Health, Disability and Ageing – The Diversity Consultative Committee
- TAFE NSW – Nursing and HSA ICRG
- Stillbirth CRE Education Committee & R&R Advisory Group
- Midwifery Futures Project
- Red Nose healing through community
- Department of Health, Disability and Ageing – Consultation on information and support needs of people experiencing miscarriage and their families
- Monash University – Silent issues in women's health study
- SA Department of Health and Wellbeing – Gayle's Law Advisory Group discussion
- Representation on AHPRA shaping better regulatory experiences working group
- Review of General Practice Incentives Consultation Webinar
- Palliative Care – ECHO National Advisory Group
- National Women's Health Advisory Council
- Southern Cross University Bachelor of Nursing/Master of Nursing Advisory meeting
- ACCPA Grad TTP Advisory Committee (completed)
- MRFF RART: Scaling up infectious disease POC testing for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Nurse Practitioner Workforce Plan Implementation Advisory Group
- University of Wollongong OCEAN Project
- TGA – Prioritising areas of reform for medicine shortages and discontinuations
- My Aged Care Access Discovery Customer Experience Project
- Australian Digital Health Agency – Clinical partnerships consultation

- McGrath Model of Care for All Cancer Co-design consultation
- Collaboration with CARPA to develop and open the CARPA Remote Health Management scholarship with a national focus on WHS leadership development to proactively develop improved safety and security in remote contexts

Events

- National Nurses Forum (CAN)
- Australian Indigenous Health/Info Net Adelaide Roundtable
- APNA Essential Health Summit
- Council of Deans of Nursing and Midwifery Symposium
- DANA Symposium and networking event
- Western NSW Health Research Network

Other

- Remote Primary Health Care Manuals Governance Committee (joint venture agreement between CRANplus, CARPA and CAAC)

MEMBERSHIP

Our Members are central to everything we do. With over 2,000 individuals and organisations contributing to our mission, CRANplus remains closely connected to the sector we serve, advocating for, supporting, and amplifying the needs of our committed Membership.

In 2024/2025, our Membership base remained steady at over 2,000. After reaching this number last year, our focus has been on maintaining strong connections and ensuring Members continue to feel supported.

While overall demographics stayed consistent, we saw a welcome increase in younger Members, reflecting growing engagement from the next generation of remote and isolated health professionals and reinforcing our role in supporting an evolving workforce.

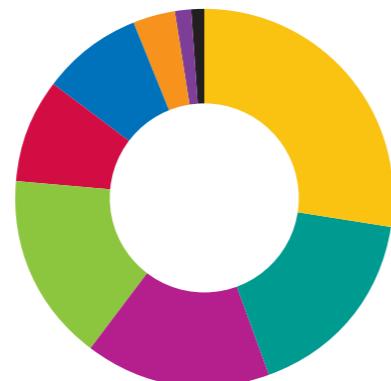
Membership fees remained unchanged this financial year, with CRANplus continuing to prioritise affordability and accessibility, particularly for those working in remote settings.

Member engagement this year was shaped by the 2024 Member Survey and the Nursing & Midwifery Roundtable (outlined in the Professional Services section). The survey provided valuable insights from those working on the ground, helping us identify current challenges, emerging priorities, and practical solutions. This feedback directly informs our work in education, support, and advocacy.

Members continue to find value in their CRANplus Membership through access to benefits like scholarships, grants, course discounts, and the *CRANplus Magazine*.

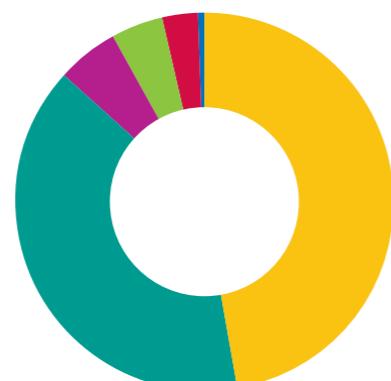
We're grateful for the continued trust and support of our Individual and Corporate Members. Your dedication to remote health and your commitment through Membership enable CRANplus to continue advocating, educating, and supporting the remote health workforce.

Membership by location



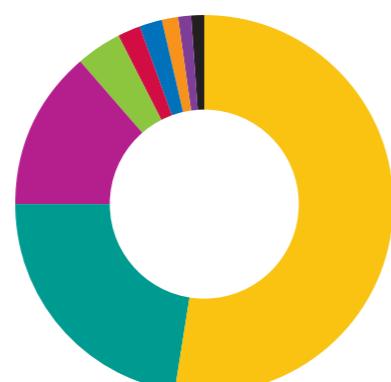
QLD	27.5%
NSW	17.0%
VIC	16.0%
VIC	16.0%
NT	9.0%
SA	8.5%
TAS	3.5%
Overseas	1.5%
ACT	1.0%

Membership by type



Full Membership	47.5%
Concessional	39.5%
Undergraduate Student	5.5%
Corporate Members & Partners	4.5%
Fellows	2.5%
Other	0.5%

Membership by profession



RN	54.0%
Undergraduate Student	23.0%
RN/RM	14.0%
Other	4.0%
Nurse Practitioners	1.5%
Medical Officers	1.5%
EN	1.0%
Allied Health	0.5%
RM	0.5%

Corporate Members and Partners



MEDIA & PUBLICATIONS

CRANAPlus continues to leverage a diverse mix of in-house and external digital and print media to promote awareness of our services and advocate for the needs of remote area nurses and midwives. Through these channels, we aim to support, inform, and connect the remote health workforce. Media and communications activities during the 2024/2025 financial year included, but were not limited to:

Our website. The CRANAPlus website recorded more than 900,000 visits across the full financial year, with seasonal fluctuations consistent with previous periods. Continuous quality improvement efforts ensured the site remained a trusted source of contemporary, curated content for remote health professionals.

The CRANAPulse eNewsletter. We delivered 50 editions of our weekly newsletter, providing timely updates on industry news, learning opportunities, research, and events. The subscriber base remained strong, reaching a peak of 10,189 subscribers with an average open rate of 33.3%, reflecting high engagement and list health.

CRANAPlus Magazine. Three editions of *CRANAPlus Magazine* were published in August and December 2024, and April 2025, each with print runs of more than 7,500 copies. These were distributed to the rural and remote health workforce and sector stakeholders across the nation. Online magazine uploads attracted over 22,000 views, with digital and social media channels continuing to expand the reach of magazine content.

Social media. Our social media presence grew steadily, reaching 9,058 followers across LinkedIn, Facebook, Instagram, and X (formerly Twitter) – a 4.68% increase and the third consecutive reporting period of growth over 4.5%. Our exclusive Member Only Facebook Group now has 420 active members, an increase of more than 21% this financial year.

Mainstream media. This year CRANAPlus remained an active voice in mainstream media through strategic communications and engagement. Our conference and advocacy work generated media coverage, while our social media content was shared across various platforms. These efforts helped amplify the perspectives of the remote health workforce and ensured that key sector issues were represented in national conversations.



Photo: totalla - stock.adobe.com



EDUCATION SERVICES



CRANplus Education continues to set the benchmark for excellence in rural and remote health workforce development, powered by people, purpose, and passion. While many providers centralise their offerings, we mobilise, bringing culturally safe, high-quality education to the furthest corners of the country because remote health deserves more than remote access.

Courses

We successfully delivered 105 courses this year in all states and territories.

Number of courses by location



A total of 2,096 remote and isolated health professionals attended our face-to-face and online courses this financial year. 97% of participants rate our courses as good or very good.

Percentage of courses by type



In 2025, CRANplus introduced a Net Promoter Score (NPS) measurement across all courses to track participant loyalty and satisfaction. Since implementation, 84.36% of participants have rated their experience 9-10 out of 10 when asked how likely they are to recommend a CRANplus course to a friend or colleague, categorising them as 'Promoters' - the highest rating tier.

Online courses

As of the end of 2024, a total of 248 users have enrolled in CRANplus' Clinical Assessment Suite online courses. These modules are currently undergoing a comprehensive update to ensure they remain clinically relevant, culturally safe, and aligned with national standards. The revised suite will be relaunched in 2026, supporting high-quality, accessible education for remote and isolated health professionals.

The Mental Health Emergencies online course is also currently undergoing review. CRANplus is actively engaging external stakeholders to ensure the updated course, scheduled for relaunch in the next financial year, effectively equips clinicians who lack specialist training or access to dedicated mental health services with the essential knowledge and skills to respond to mental health crises.

One of CRANplus' standout achievements this year was the successful expansion of the Triage Emergency Course (Intensive). Delivered entirely online, this course enables participants to collaborate in facilitated tutorials, navigating remote case studies using the updated Australian Emergency Triage Kit (2024). We increased our offerings to 13 sessions, with 209 health professionals participating, extending critical triage training to those serving Australia's most remote communities.

Above, from left: Mass casualty scenario AREC course, Cocos (Keeling) Islands, August 2024; MEC course set up, Cocos (Keeling) Islands, August 2024; MEC Resus Station at the CRANplus Remote Nursing and Midwifery Expo, Melbourne, October 2024; Ear Station at the same Expo. Overleaf, from left: AREC course, Adelaide, January 2025; REC course, Shepparton, May 2025; REC course, Brisbane, May 2025; MEC course, Brisbane, May 2025.

EDUCATION SERVICES



Update of material ready to launch

In preparation for CRANplus' transition to the CANVAS learning management system, our education team has collaboratively updated all online pre-learning modules throughout the year. These updates have been rigorously reviewed by multiple subject matter experts, grounded in evidence-based practice, and mapped to the *National Rural and Remote Nursing Generalist Framework (2023-2027)*. This foundational work ensures our digital education remains contemporary, culturally safe, and responsive to the needs of remote health professionals, supporting a seamless shift to a more agile and accessible platform.

As part of our commitment to inclusive and culturally safe education, CRANplus has embedded gender-inclusive language and affirming pronouns across all learning products. Case studies now reflect diverse identities with respect and accuracy, strengthening representation and fostering safer learning environments for all health professionals.

The updated pre-learning modules and new learning management system will launch in the 2026 calendar year, alongside the eagerly anticipated relaunch of the Practical Skills course, reflecting our continued dedication to excellence, equity, and sector leadership.

Volunteers

Volunteers remain an essential and deeply valued part of the CRANplus team. In line with our commitment to best practice, we have aligned our volunteer engagement with the National Standards for Volunteer Involvement, refining our approach to recognition, support, feedback, and contemporary engagement. As a result, facilitators now have clear position descriptions outlining the scope of their role, with attributes assessed against the Fair Work Act definition as well as a volunteer agreement and policy that aligns with all eight national standards. Following our annual volunteer survey, we initiated a targeted response plan to strengthen communication, onboarding, and ongoing support, ensuring our volunteers feel informed, empowered, and connected.

Cultural Safety

In May 2025, the CRANplus education team launched a Cultural Safety Project to further strengthen our commitment to inclusive, respectful learning environments across all face-to-face workshops. This initiative aligns with CRANplus' Values and our First Peoples' Strategy 2021-2025, celebrating the rich cultural diversity of Australia with a particular focus on the heritage, knowledge, and lived experiences of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The project aims to eliminate cultural biases and barriers and foster cultural humility among course facilitators and participants. By reaffirming our zero-tolerance stance on racism and embedding the principles of Cultural Safety, we build on the progress shaped by many CRANplus staff, past and present.

Through this work, we ensure that all individuals feel safe, respected, and valued in our education spaces, regardless of cultural background. This commitment also reflects the legislated expectation that all health professionals understand and apply Cultural Safety in both attitude and practice.

As we look ahead, CRANplus Education remains committed to leading with Cultural Safety, sector alignment, and innovation – ensuring every learner is supported, and every community is served.

What people think of our courses

MEC Alice Springs June 2025

"Delivery was great. Good learning environment. Loved that you have all had experience in Rural Remote environment and could understand the challenges we all face. Well done to all the Facilitators."

MEC Darwin March 2025

"Very organised, great teachers, and the dedication is obvious."

ALS Cairns September 2024

"Nice teaching team, dedicated, enthusiastic, hearts of gold in the right place, with a passion for teaching their subject."

REC Darwin March 2025

"My nursing in primary care has improved since doing this course I am more thorough in my assessments and was also not enjoying nursing much but have found a renewed enthusiasm again since doing this course. It's great to have hands on experience and hear from a doctor what they want from us as nurses in remote retrieval and on call. Real scenarios also helped. Enjoyed the fun game at the end as well. Was a privilege to have an RFDS nurse training us as well."

AREC Cairns April 2025

"The course was very well presented. I liked the practical scenarios, they were very relevant/relatable to what we may see in remote and resource-limited areas. It would be great to have more of these scenarios. It managed to get the right balance between conveying getting critical care skills right and being supportive and providing an enjoyable experience."

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SERVICES



In 2024/2025 the Mental Health & Wellbeing Service continued to provide vital support for the rural and remote health workforce. In a year marked by ongoing workforce shortages and the unique challenges of delivering healthcare in remote and isolated settings, our team remained committed to providing compassionate, high-quality mental health and wellbeing services.

From our 24/7 Bush Support Line to tailored workshops, digital resources, and weekly *Mindful Monday* emails, we worked tirelessly to ensure health professionals felt supported and heard. This report highlights the key achievements, growth areas, and feedback received across our service offerings during the year.

Bush Support Line

The Bush Support Line (BSL) remains a lifeline for many health professionals, providing confidential psychological counselling and support 24/7, every day of the year. Contact volumes remained steady, with callers engaging in meaningful conversations averaging 41 minutes.

In November, we introduced follow-up calls for individuals accessing the BSL. This initiative enables continuity of care and provides deeper support, and is currently being monitored to assess outcomes and future needs.

A powerful reflection of the BSL's impact comes from direct user feedback:

"I called the Bush Support Line in the middle of the night after nightmares and anxiety over being physically assaulted by a patient at work the week before. I had no idea what to expect when I called, and had no idea what else to do in the middle of the night, but what a great service! XX was absolutely brilliant, she was very patient, listened after I did not feel heard by anybody and provided great strategies for me to feel safe and relax. Thank you very much for this service and thank you so much to XX! Please tell her she is amazing."

Wellbeing Workshops

CRANplus continues to deliver tailored, flexible wellbeing workshops designed to meet the diverse needs of the rural and remote health workforce. These workshops are a key part of our proactive approach to mental health and wellbeing.

During this reporting period:

- 33 workshops reached 579 health professionals, with 35% delivered face-to-face
- 364 participants attending the Maternity Emergency Care course engaged with a pre-recorded CRANplus Wellbeing Reset session.

Workshops are evaluated through post-session surveys and informal feedback. Participants consistently rated the sessions highly, with an average score of 4.5 out of 5, indicating strong satisfaction and perceived usefulness.

Importantly, these workshops also serve as a gateway to other services. One remote health manager, previously unaware of the BSL, accessed the service after hosting a wellbeing workshop. They described their experience as "highly positive" and has since requested additional workshops to ensure their team are informed about this "incredible service."

Another exciting new initiative was "Exchanging Insights: Thriving in Remote Health", a mental health and wellbeing panel session held at this year's CRANplus conference.

This session, featuring the lived experiences of remote health professionals, was highly valued by attendees for its practical insights on managing wellbeing in remote contexts.

Mindful Mondays

Mindful Mondays, our weekly wellbeing email, continues to be a valued and engaging resource for rural and remote health professionals. This year, subscriber numbers grew by 5.25%, reaching 4,230 individuals. The publication boasts an impressive open rate of 46.6%, well above industry standards and a 5% increase from the previous year.

Each edition offers practical insights, reflective prompts, and strategies to support mental wellbeing. Feedback from readers highlights its impact:

"I look forward to receiving this every week as it does contain some pearls of wisdom and does have the effect of self-reflection. I make time to think about the content within. This is beneficial to my day, my wellbeing and my work. And I have shared certain pieces with my work colleagues. It is a great initiative that has the opportunity to make a difference."

Above, from left: Wellbeing dog Chilli blowing kisses; *Exchanging Insights: Thriving in the Remote Health Workforce* - the Mental Health & Wellbeing panel at the CRANplus 2024 Remote Nursing and Midwifery Conference; Wellbeing connection yarn; The Mental Health & Wellbeing team at the same conference. Overleaf, from left: Mindfulness activities and conversation; Wellbeing massage.

MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING SERVICES



Resources and Digital Engagement

CRANplus provides a wide range of mental health and wellbeing resources in various formats, including electronic and hard-copy materials, podcasts, e-learning modules, and information sheets. These are accessed through direct service interactions, targeted promotions, and the CRANplus website.

During the year:

- **33 resources** were available
- **Podcasts** were accessed over 400 times
- **E-learning modules** were completed 212 times.

This level of engagement demonstrates the workforce's active interest in integrating wellbeing tools into their professional practice.

In response to emerging needs, we developed new resources, including:

- *Wellbeing for the Bush: Vicarious Trauma Tip Sheet*
- *Wellbeing for the Bush: Burnout Tip Sheet*
- *Mindful Breathing* video
- Additional materials on Burnout, Mindfulness, Supporting Yourself and Others After a Traumatic Event, and Building a Supportive Workplace was added to our workshop content.

To further support the workforce, we distributed 609 Wellbeing Packs and 819 additional resources. These efforts reflect our ongoing commitment to adapting and expanding our offerings to meet the evolving needs of remote health professionals.

Conference

At this year's CRANplus Conference, the Mental Health & Wellbeing Team hosted another successful Wellbeing Lounge, welcoming over 100 visitors daily. Delegates dropped in to connect with colleagues, enjoy a 5-minute massage, relax with support dogs, recharge themselves and their devices, explore mindfulness activities, learn about CRANplus' wellbeing resources and workshops, share strategies, and meet the team behind the Bush Support Line. This year, we also offered 1:1 sessions with one of our Bush Support Line psychologists for delegates who wanted to make the most of face-to-face connections.

Looking ahead

As we move into the next reporting period, CRANplus remains dedicated to strengthening the mental health and wellbeing of Australia's rural and remote health workforce. We will continue to listen, adapt, and innovate to ensure our services remain relevant, accessible, and impactful.

Whether through a late-night call to the Bush Support Line, a reflective moment inspired by *Mindful Mondays*, or a tailored wellbeing workshop, our goal is clear: to support the sustainability of the rural and remote health workforce.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



Stakeholder engagement

Throughout 2024/2025, CRANplus represented the remote and isolated health perspective at over 30 events, including workshops, symposia, consultations, committees, forums and working groups. Engagement includes state and Commonwealth committees and advisory groups, National Rural Health Commissioner forums (and regular meetings), National Rural Health Alliance Council, universities and evidence-based practice groups. Professional Services submitted 47 written submissions and contributed to several joint submissions with partner organisations, covering clinical, professional and legislative domains.

CRANplus Member Nursing and Midwifery Roundtable

Quarterly meetings with the CRANplus Member Nursing and Midwifery Roundtable have become a valued forum for Member feedback, guiding CRANplus' priorities and advocacy, particularly in areas such as safety, workforce sustainability, and clinical matters. Now in its third year, the Roundtable includes representation from all states and territories, First Peoples health professionals, and nurses and midwives. It has also proven effective for leadership development, with several former members joining the CRANplus Board in late 2024.

CRANplus Rural and Remote Nursing and Midwifery Generalist Pathway Program

In January 2025, CRANplus submitted a Pre-Budget Submission titled *Rural and Remote Nursing and Midwifery Generalist Pathway Program*. This submission requested funding to deliver a nationally accredited and recognised program designed to support and prepare nurses and midwives for practice in rural, remote, and isolated healthcare settings across Australia. The proposal received strong support from sector organisations and key stakeholders.

Subsequently, in response to sector demand, CRANplus submitted a supplementary Pre-Budget Submission for a *Clinical Reflective Supervision Program for Rural and Remote Nurses and Midwives*, designed to provide ongoing professional development and clinical support.

CRANcast

CRANplus continued to deliver *CRANcast*, a podcast sharing the experiences of rural and remote health professionals. Designed for accessibility during travel or downtime, *CRANcast* helps the workforce stay connected with CRANplus. A particular highlight was episode 25: *The Foxes: "Trust on both sides" – building connections within communities*, where we spoke to remote area nurse couple, Ben and Lisa Fox, about life and work in the community of Ltyentye Apurte, 85km from Alice Springs.

Student engagement

Professional Services continues to engage and support undergraduate health students in both rural and metropolitan settings. Initiatives include clinical placement scholarships, the *LINKS* Mentoring Program, and the provision of a conference volunteer scholarship to facilitate attendance at the conference by a CRANplus Student Member.

LINKS Mentoring Program

There has been a significant increase to 31 mentor-mentee pairs currently undertaking the *LINKS* Mentoring Program, and the *LINKS* mentoring modules continue to be well utilised by health practitioners seeking informal mentoring opportunities in their workplaces. CRANplus has additionally received positive feedback from a Tasmanian hospital that has modelled its in-house mentoring initiative on the CRANplus *LINKS* Mentoring Program.

Scholarships and Grants

In 2024/2025, CRANplus has continued to support existing and aspiring clinicians through the administration of the following scholarship and grant schemes:

- **Gayle Woodford Memorial Scholarship:** Jointly sponsored with Flinders University, this scholarship covers all fees for the Graduate Certificate in Remote Health Practice. The 2024 recipient was Ms Erica Stone.
- **Undergraduate Remote Placement Scholarship:** Supported six recipients across nursing, midwifery, and allied health disciplines by covering the cost of fares, travel and accommodation associated with clinical placement.
- **Nurses Memorial Foundation of South Australia Grant:** Enabled 12 Members to undertake CRANplus clinical courses via registration fee subsidies.
- **CWA Nursing and Midwifery Professional Development Grant:** In collaboration with the Country Women's Association (NSW), CRANplus supported the professional development of six rural and remote nurses (registered and enrolled) and midwives.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES



New Scholarships

CRANplus continues to seek external sponsorships to support the rural and remote health workforce. In 2025, two new scholarships were launched:

- CARPA Remote Health Management Scholarship:** Supports the development of leadership, management, and workplace health and safety (WHS) in the remote health workforce. Two recipients were selected in Round 1, 2025, both of whom completed the Diploma of Leadership and Management.
- Facts of Life Lactation Consultant Preparation Scholarship:** With the generous support of Facts of Life Lactation Education and an anonymous Member donor, three scholarships were awarded to remote nurses and midwives to prepare for the IBLCE exam by completing a package of up to 13 approved courses delivered by Facts of Life.

CRANplus Annual Conference

CRANplus hosted its 41st Annual Conference, the Remote Nursing and Midwifery Conference, at Crown Melbourne in October 2024. The event welcomed more than 250 delegates and featured a two-day program across three streams: Clinical, Mental Health & Wellbeing, and Workforce. A free Remote Nursing and Midwifery Expo was held prior to the conference, attracting strong attendance from both delegates and the public.

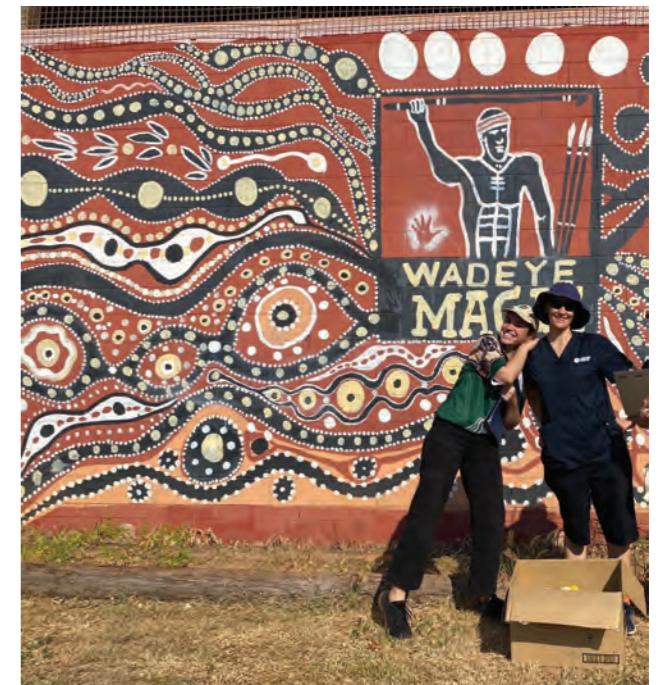
The expo provided an invaluable opportunity for those considering a career in remote health to explore practical skills through hands-on demonstrations and engage directly with experienced practitioners about pathways into remote practice. Planning is underway for the 42nd Annual Conference, scheduled to take place in May 2026 at the Perth Convention and Exhibition Centre.

2024 CRANplus Awards

The 2024 CRANplus Awards were a highlight of the annual conference, with winners announced during a vibrant and heartfelt celebration at the conference gala dinner. These awards honour the dedication, innovation, and impact of individuals and teams working in remote and isolated health across Australia.

- CRANplus Aurora Award for the Remote and Isolated Health Professional of the Year:** The most prestigious award of the evening, the Aurora Award, celebrates an individual who has made an exceptional and lasting contribution to remote health. The 2024 recipient was Lesley Woolf, OAM, Executive Health Manager at Mala'la Health Service Aboriginal Corporation in Maningrida. Lesley's leadership and unwavering commitment to community health were met with much applause.
- Excellence in Remote Health Practice Award:** Sponsored by James Cook University/Murtupini Centre for Rural and Remote Health, this award was presented to Susan Wilkes, Director of Nursing at Birdsville Primary Health Centre. Susan's exemplary clinical leadership and dedication to her community were warmly acknowledged by peers and colleagues.

- Early to Remote Practice Award:** Sponsored by Flinders University, Rural and Remote Health, this award recognises emerging talent in the sector. Registered Nurse Catherine Priestley, from Wadeye, NT, was celebrated for her passion, resilience, and early contributions to remote practice.
- Collaborative Team Award:** Sponsored by CRANplus, this award honours outstanding teamwork in remote health. The Indian Ocean Territories Health Services Nursing Team, based on Christmas Island, were applauded for their collaborative spirit and commitment to delivering high-quality care in a unique and challenging environment.
- Excellence in Education and/or Research Award:** Sponsored by James Cook University and the Central Queensland Centre for Rural and Remote Health, this award was presented to Dr J'Belle Foster, RN, in recognition of her contributions to advancing education and research that support the remote health workforce.



Previous page, from left: Dr Nicole Jeffery-Dawes and Kristy Hill at Compass Conference in August 2024; CRANplus display at the same conference; Dr Byrne with Danielle Jocumsen who presented an abstract poster on the roles and skill requirements of registered nurses working in rural and remote areas at the CRANplus 2024 Remote Nursing and Midwifery Conference; Conference attendee practising at the clinical skill stations; Erica Stone, 2024 Gayle Woodford Memorial Scholarship recipient. Above, from left: *Exchanging Insights: Thriving in the Remote Health Workforce* panel, led by CRANplus Bush Support Line Psychologist Dr Nicole Jeffery-Dawes; Welcome function at the CRANplus 2024 Remote Nursing and Midwifery Conference; John Wright CRANplus Board Chair presenting Lesley Woolf with the 2024 Aurora Award at CRANplus' 2024 Gala Dinner; Gala Dinner at the prestigious Crown Palladium, Melbourne; CRANplus Member Tom Rampal and CRANplus Mental Health and Wellbeing Educator Laura Berry at ACNP National Conference in November 2024. Above right: Catherine Priestley, 2024 CRANplus Early to Remote Practice award recipient (right) with Rural Generalist Registrar Dr Leah Ginnivan, in Wadeye (about 420 km south west of Darwin).

FINANCIAL REPORT 2024/2025



David Derrick
CFO/General Manager
Corporate Services

A year of strategic growth and realignment

This year, the 2025 financial statements were prepared and audited by Grant Thornton, and it is with great pleasure that I announce this year's audit report was again completed with no qualifications.

In 2024/2025, CRANplus continued its mission to strengthen and support the remote and isolated health workforce, navigating a challenging national economic landscape while focusing investment on building a more sustainable and agile organisation.

CRANplus recorded a 6.8% increase in revenue to \$7.7m. This was primarily driven by continued strong demand for CRANplus' core education programs, which contributed revenue of \$1.87m, a 13% year-on-year increase.

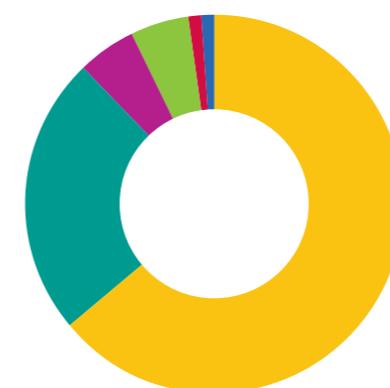
Despite growth, CRANplus faced rising delivery and service costs pressures, reflecting broader national economic pressures. As a result, the organisation has recorded an operating surplus of \$0.98m for the financial year. This included a \$0.59m gain on revaluation of land and buildings.

In early to mid-2025, CRANplus undertook a comprehensive organisational review, a key step in realigning resources with strategic priorities and reaffirming the organisation's commitment to financial sustainability. By carefully assessing operational structures and costs, CRANplus is now better positioned to operate more efficiently and effectively.

A key strategic investment during this financial year included the ongoing implementation of CRANplus' digital transformation initiative – the Digital Uplift Project. Once fully implemented, this program will deliver both internal efficiencies and enhanced online experiences for members, while supporting long-term cost reductions and service quality improvements through the adoption of modern digital platforms.

In summary, while the financial year presented economic and operational challenges, CRANplus has taken decisive steps to strengthen its foundations and ensure it can continue to champion and support rural health workers and the communities they work in across Australia for years to come.

Revenue by source



Grant	64.0%
Courses	24.0%
Membership	5.0%
Other	5.0%
Donations	1.0%
Gain on disposal of assets	1.0%

Expenses by category



Employee costs	51.0%
General and admin costs	32.0%
Other expenses	8.0%
Consultants and subcontractors fees	7.0%
Depreciation and amortisation expense	2.0%

Total Revenue



\$7.7m

Education programs \$1.87m

Revenue Growth



6.8%

Education programs 13% year-on-year increase

Above: Wirestock – stock.adobe.com

FINANCIAL REPORT 2024/2025

Statement of Profit or Loss and Other Comprehensive Income

For the year ended 30 June 2025

	2025 \$	2024 \$
Revenue and Other Income		
Revenue	7,522,624	7,142,470
Donations	80,379	52,767
Gain on disposal of assets	92,353	12,069
Total revenue	7,695,374	7,207,306
Expenditure		
Consultants and subcontractor fees	(542,449)	(122,459)
Amortisation of intangible assets	-	(167,156)
Depreciation	(118,096)	(155,015)
Employee costs	(3,712,849)	(3,964,385)
Expected credit loss (gain)/loss	10,080	(55,950)
Course costs, catering and facilitators	(304,952)	(283,073)
Donations and Scholarships	(30,141)	(52,713)
IT costs	(711,112)	(824,937)
Postage, printing and stationery	(350,287)	(324,838)
Travel and accommodation	(639,967)	(691,270)
Legal Fees	(101,430)	-
Insurance costs	(61,568)	(56,540)
Advertising	(56,815)	(58,343)
Professional fees	(128,118)	(13,556)
Intangible assets written off	-	(1,366,743)
Other expenses	(570,411)	(602,773)
Total operating expenses	(7,318,115)	(8,739,751)
Operating (deficit)/surplus	377,241	(1,532,445)
Finance income	25,194	20,009
Finance costs	(13,013)	(7,174)
Surplus/(deficit) for the year	389,422	(1,519,610)
Other Comprehensive Income		
<i>Items that will not be reclassified subsequently to profit or loss</i>		
Gain on revaluation of land and buildings	591,760	491,132
Total comprehensive income for the year	981,092	(1,028,478)

Photo: Adam - stock.adobe.com

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