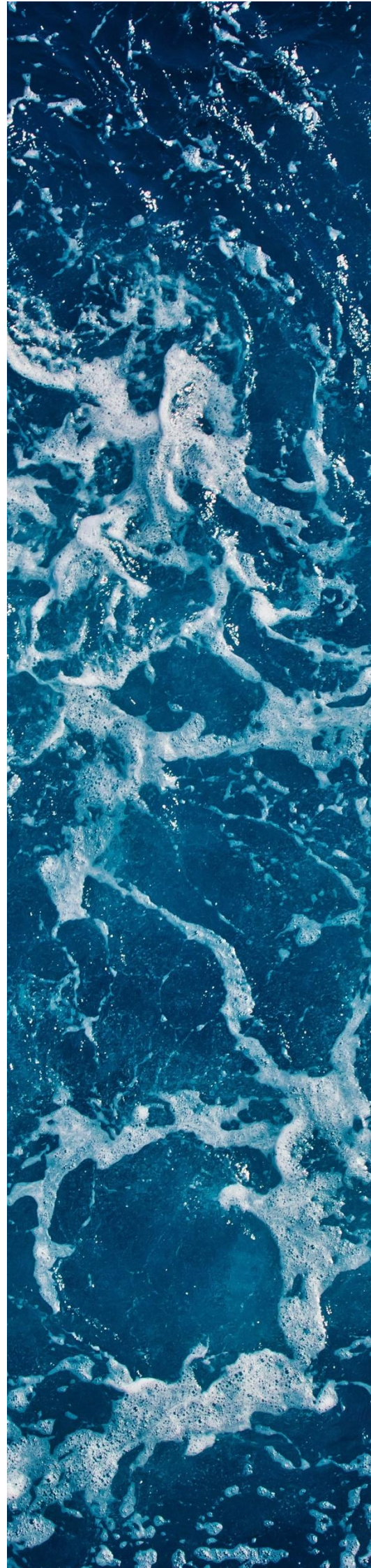


WATERMARK SEARCH INTERNATIONAL CANDIDATE BRIEF

**Chief Financial Officer / Executive
Director Business Services
North Queensland Primary Health
Network (NQPHN)
October 2025**



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Job Title	Executive Director Business Services, Chief Financial Officer
Location	Cairns, Townsville, or Mackay
Reports To	Chief Executive Officer
Direct Reports	3+

About the Organisation

The Northern Queensland Primary Health Network (NQPHN) is one of 31 independent and regionally-focused PHNs dedicated to enhancing healthcare across North Queensland. Serving approximately 700,000 residents, the NQPHN region spans from St Lawrence on the south coast to the Torres Strait in the north, and west to Croydon and Kowanyama.

With a dedicated team of over 90 staff members working from offices in Cairns (Gimuy-Walubura Yidinji and Djabugay Nation country), Townsville (Bindal and Wulgurukaba country), and Mackay (Yuwibara country), NQPHN is committed to addressing the unique health needs of its diverse communities.

For more information, please refer to nqphn.com.au

Our Values

	Value Statement	Core Commitment
Collaboration	We connect co-operatively across boundaries to share ideas and achieve our goals together. 'We work together'	• I will work co-operatively across teams to achieve outcomes. • I will connect with others to build trusting relationships. • I will share ideas, knowledge, and resources.
Leadership	We are empowered, inspired, and will step up to create a better future. 'We are all leaders'	• I will role-model positive behaviours. • I will create opportunities to have a positive impact. • I will take responsibility for contributing to NQPHN's culture and success.
Integrity	We hold ourselves to the highest standards of ethics and professionalism. 'We do the right thing'	• I will be consistently ethical and trustworthy. • I will display high levels of professionalism at all times. • I will represent NQPHN with pride.
Accountability	We own our actions, follow through on our promises, and live our values. 'We do what we say'	• I will follow through on my commitments. • I will take ownership of my work and performance. • I will be transparent and forthcoming with information.
Respect	We hear, acknowledge, and value all people and voices, finding unity in our diversity. 'We are considerate'	• I will actively seek out and value different perspectives. • I will treat all people with appreciation, dignity, and courtesy. • I will be culturally informed and sensitive.

The Directorate

Business Services (BS) Directorate

The directorate plays a pivotal role in supporting and enabling NQPHN's mission to provide high-quality, targeted health services to the community. Overseeing operations across three office locations, the directorate manages key functional areas, including finance, risk management, workplace health and safety, auditing, compliance, quality, and contracts and procurement.

The primary goal of the Business Services Directorate is to enhance organisational capability in governance, procurement, risk management, and finance, driving operational excellence. This optimisation ensures that NQPHN can effectively commission healthcare service initiatives that align with the genuine needs of the North Queensland community.

As a cornerstone of the organisation, the Business Services Directorate fosters collaboration and synergy across teams, providing essential support to enhance service delivery. It designs efficient processes and offers guidance to ensure that all teams perform effectively in achieving NQPHN's mission.

Role Summary

The Executive Director Business Services, Chief Financial Officer (EDBS, CFO) is a senior leadership role responsible for providing comprehensive and effective Financial, Compliance and Procurement, Quality Assurance, Risk and Safety services across the NQPHN organisation.

The position provides executive and strategic leadership to enable and optimise the organisation's effectiveness, capability, and efficiency to achieve strategic objectives in the key priority areas.

This includes:

- Providing leadership and advice to support the organisation to become high performing, including ensuring business decisions are informed, relevant, and consistent with the agreed strategic objectives.
- Effective implementation of best practice financial and business management, systems and processes, compliance, quality and risk monitoring and reporting.
- Leading the organisation's commitment to accountable management and continuous improvement in business operations.
- Leading and facilitating the achievement of all activities delivered by the Finance, Accounts and Payroll team, Compliance and Procurement team, and Risk Safety and Quality team and ensure their alignment with the organisation's strategic vision, key performance indicators (KPIs) and budgets.

Key Responsibilities

Role Specific

- Work with the Board, Committee (FARM), CEO and Executive to establish and implement best practice systems and processes to support the effective and efficient operation of a contemporary Primary Health Network organisation.
- Lead the development and implementation of quality reporting, effective information management and strategic advice to support accurate, timely and evidence-based decision-making pertaining to strategic objectives and operational execution.
- Ensure compliance with legislative regulatory and contractual conditions by providing accurate and timely financial information to the CEO, Finance Audit and Risk Management Committee, Board and external stakeholders.
- Work with the Board, CEO and Executive and other senior managers to lead the development of organisational budgets and oversee monitoring of financial performance and ensure compliance with budgetary funding guidelines.

- Manage the budgeting, forecast and cost management processes in alignment with the company's strategic objectives.
- Develop and implement plans to make maximum use of financial resources and consistently improve the company's operating performance.
- Conduct financial analysis/reviews of strategic business initiatives to ensure adequate financial resourcing and consistency with business objectives.
- Manage reporting to the Finance Audit and Risk Management Committee.
- Manage the auditor relationship and is responsible for ensuring the control, maintenance and integrity of the accounting and related systems and functions.
- Ensure that all organisational policies and procedures are fully implemented and adhered to within your area of responsibility and meet the organisations requirements and legislation.

Executive Management Team

- As part of the Executive Team, develop and implement the organisation's strategic plan and internal operational planning processes, contributing towards the achievement of the plan and organisational vision.
- As part of the Executive Team, operate with a high level of autonomy and responsibility to help shape and influence the culture, capability, and success of the organisation, including achieving highly effective integration and communication across teams.
- Identify, build, and maintain excellent relationships with key stakeholder and partner organisations to influence system reform and strategically align NQPHN in the context of the local health environment.
- Demonstrate a Team First mindset—prioritising enterprise-wide outcomes over functional interests.
- Promote collaboration, clarity, and cohesion across directorates to support integrated and effective operations.
- Contribute to shaping the organisation's culture, capability, and future direction through active involvement in strategic planning and transformation.

Organisation-wide

- Committed to "One PHN", working collaboratively and engaging purposefully across the organisation, including the offices, teams, and functions to meet the strategic objectives of NQPHN.
- Ensure "best practice" processes across all areas of responsibilities.
- Comply with the organisation's policies, procedures and values.
- Ensure the safety of yourself and others in line with the organisation's WHS policies and procedures and the Workplace Health and Safety Act 2011.
- Perform other duties reasonably required as directed.

Key Selection Criteria

- A tertiary qualification as Chartered Accountant (CA) or Certified Practicing Accountant (CPA) (essential).
- At least five years' experience in a senior management role within a business services or finance context. Experience within the healthcare sector, community services or a not-for profit organisation/s will be highly regarded.
- Experience in managing and developing a multi-faceted budget of over \$50m, ideally in a health care setting.
- Extensive experience and expertise operating at a high level in business services and business management roles and in implementing strategic financial and business management practices, including in the areas of finance, compliance, procurement, risk, quality assurance and safety.
- Experience working with Board, Finance, Audit and Risk Management committees (FARM) is desirable.
- Demonstrated high level analytical and problem-solving skills.
- Ability to plan and provide strategic leadership both within a multi-disciplinary team and more broadly across a complex human service delivery environment.
- Highly developed project management skills, in order to plan, lead, and manage complex projects simultaneously, to a high standard, on time, and within budget.
- Demonstrated ability to build effective and productive working relationships with team members, clients, stakeholders, and other industry partners to achieve quality outcomes.

- Highly developed interpersonal, communication, influencing, partnering, negotiation, and conflict resolution skills, including the ability to develop high-level written documentation such as strategic documents, timely and accurate reports, correspondence, briefing papers and plans.
- Demonstrated ability:
 - to achieve organisational change, whilst ensuring the delivery of high-quality outcomes, both internally and externally
 - to identify opportunities for continuous improvement, including organisation improvement, self-improvement and the improvement of team members
 - achieving results in an environment of ongoing health reform (desirable).
- Knowledge and experience of working within government systems such as Quality & Accreditation, Corporate/Clinical Governance systems, Reporting and Operational Risk Management Frameworks, and Reporting.
- Experience utilising project management tools.
- Demonstrated ability to work with diverse communities including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders, and Australian South Sea Islanders in our region.
- Self-sufficient in the use of IT – Microsoft Suite including but not limited to Word, Excel, and PowerPoint.

Other Requirements

- Current drivers licence.
- Provide a National Police Check less than three months old.
- Be able to meet the requirements of a Working with Children (Blue Card) Qld (if required).
- Visa Check and work rights in Australia.

Competency Matrix

NQPHN has a competencies matrix in place that identifies a range of core competencies and capabilities at four levels (awareness, standard, skilled and mastery). The table below indicates the core competencies and their expected levels for this role.

Core Competency	Mastery
Teamwork and Team Leadership	• Makes team assignments within and outside of the Directorate to facilitate horizontal work. • Delegates authority to match responsibility and holds staff accountable for agreed upon commitments. • Contributes to a high functioning Executive Team. • Promotes group morale and productivity by being clear about output expectations. • Sees arising conflict and takes action at a Division/Directorate/Organisational level. • Develops a common understanding and is transparent about staff potential to take over new responsibilities. • Sets an example for staff development in the Division/Directorate/Organisation. • Encourages others to develop their people through development dialogues and action plans.
Resource Management	• Sets and redefines priorities and reorganises staff to increase the group's response capacity to internal and external demands. • Evaluates the financial impact of decisions and develops strategies to address financial resource issues.

Flexibility and Continuous Improvement	• Is intellectually agile in response to challenges of internal and external environments. • Solicits ideas and responds positively to those of staff, committees, and the Board. • Uses a variety of means to communicate the organisation's needs and strategic directions. • Develops a strategic direction for one's unit that connects the role of the team to the success of the organisation.
Stakeholder Engagement and Communications	• Handles creation of strategic written communication for the organisation. • Reviews complex and/or sensitive work carried out identifying the impact for the organisation. • Manages relationships among key external organisations and government entities to create long-range opportunities. • Utilises established networks of relationships to seek information of strategic importance and to seek a position of influence in key forums.
Quality Management	• Understands quality management systems, and their impact on organisational governance, as well as the basic tenets of ISO 9000. • Evaluates and monitors quality control and management systems. • Ensures quality management systems are fit for purpose and support the organisation in achieving its goals.
Strategic Thinking and Innovation	• Shares and communicates a compelling vision; generates enthusiasm and commitment. • Translates creative ideas into strategy and action. • Leads major decisions. • Inspires a sense of purpose and direction within the organisational context. • Considers the ramifications of issues and long-term impacts of decisions and actions. • Able to scan the environment to identify key trends which may drive future requirements. • Challenges the status quo.
Governance and Risk	• Develops and implements rigorous governance processes and procedures. • Develops the organisational risk appetite. • Ensures legislative requirements are adhered to. • Measures and monitors service delivery and question anomalies or where plans are not being achieved. • Has advanced knowledge of the governance requirements relating to engagement with the public and service users and may influence the setting of such governance, based on feedback and reputation in the field. • Ensures self and team members remain familiar with and adhere to all policies and procedures, including workplace health and safety. • Ensures a safe workplace and organisation.
Project and Program Management	• Able to effectively establish strategic directions for multiple projects. • Can interpret project controls effectively to deliver difficult projects or get projects back on track. • Can develop business strategies for multiple project environments, with awareness of market factors and contextual constraints. • Displays wide scope for personal autonomy. • Able to identify and estimate all project components including all aspects of costs and schedule risk. • Can produce realistic forecasts. • Can maximise supplier contribution and understands levers for best results. • Sets strategic approach to identify future problems. • Makes strategic decisions where there is a high level of uncertainty and risk.

Commissioning

- Ensures a whole of NQPHN approach to commissioning is integrated into organisational policies and practices.
 - Ensures effective governance processes are in place and team members are managed to ensure the Commissioning Framework is adhered to.
 - Monitors and evaluates both compliance and effectiveness of the Commissioning Framework within NQPHN.
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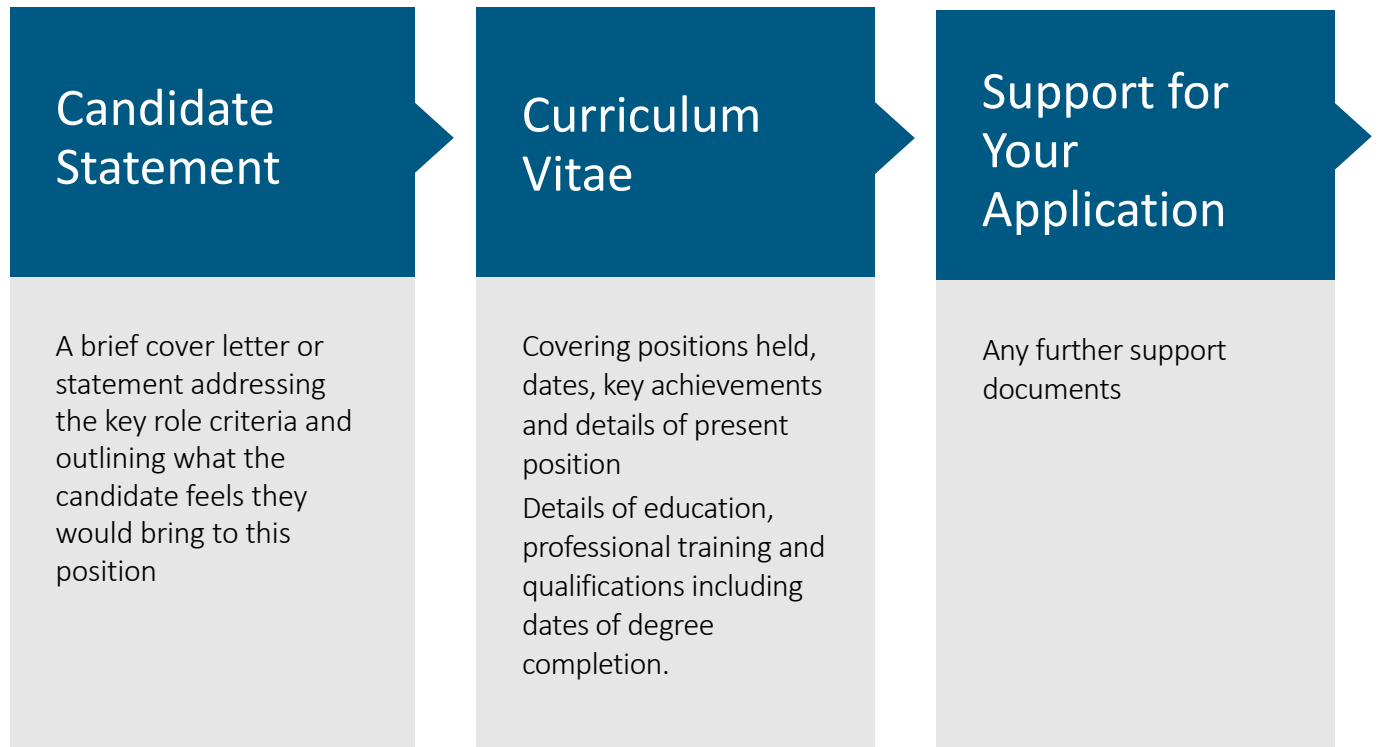
Note – some roles may only require an Awareness or Standard level of competency for areas such as Governance, Risk and Commissioning (role specific requirements).

This position description contains a limited summary of the most frequently occurring tasks and responsibilities. In practice, the employee can and will be entrusted with various other tasks and responsibilities that may also be of vital importance to the performance of his or her duties. The employee will properly execute these tasks and responsibilities and will not limit themselves to invoke the tasks and responsibilities exclusively summarised in this position description.

How to Apply

An executive search is being undertaken by Watermark alongside the public advertisement.

Applications for the position will need to include the following:



For a confidential discussion please call Will Wilson of Watermark Search on 0499 920 848.

Please send your application quoting **Ref No A006162** to Watermark Search International at search@watermarksearch.com.au. We will reply to the email address used for your application.

Closing date: 11:59PM AEST on 7 November 2025

Our Capabilities



Executive Search

Founded in 1979, we are one of the longest established Australian executive search firms. Even though we are, above all else, an Australian based firm, we have an established track record in attracting and then securing, overseas candidates.

We have considerable expertise in senior executive appointments across a broad range of public and private sector organisations. Our firm has been built on a substantial body of work undertaken for publicly listed companies, private companies, professional services, state owned corporations, government agencies, departments and advisory boards.



Interim Executive

We provide immediate and high-level specialist executives with the experience to bring stability to and provide guardianship for a company during a period of change, executive absence or performance turnaround. We also assist with providing executives who deliver on projects, programs or specialist reviews. When clients are ready to appoint an executive, we normally complete the assignment within two weeks. Our latest survey shows that those executives remain in place for an average of 9 months.



Board Appointments

We believe that strong boards make for better organisations and improved business performance. In conducting searches we do not simply look for 'a name' but rather search for candidates with the relevant skills to add real value to a board. We often start our board search by working with the client to produce a Board Skills Matrix, which then informs the specific brief.

Our track record ensures familiarity with the specific, and often sensitive, challenges involved in appointing Non-Executive Directors and Chairs with the right skill, personal and cultural fit.



Thought Leadership

As thought leaders, we undertake various pieces of research and market analysis to form our Agile Leadership Lessons Podcast, Annual Interim Executive Survey and Board Diversity Index. To view our current reports please [click here](#).

Candidate Care



At Watermark, we recognise we have a duty of care to both our clients and the candidates. As an ambassador for NQPHN, we recognise how important our role is in representing your brand, we take this responsibility seriously and treat successful and unsuccessful applicants with the same level of respect:

- All candidates filtered out before an initial interview are advised in writing.
- Candidates sourced by Watermark are called and given feedback on their performance throughout the selection process; this includes feedback about their experience, knowledge, capabilities and fit for the organisation as well as feedback about their interviewing and presentation techniques.
- Candidates who proceed to client interviews are debriefed and receive feedback either face-to-face or over the phone; this includes feedback as outlined above, plus specific feedback from any notes taken during the interview. We also provide feedback on areas for development such as interview skills, professional development and career guidance.

Candidate Charter



We respect our candidates as individuals and value them as an integral asset to our business. Our focus is on understanding their talents and aspirations and matching them to the right role and organisation. Whether we approach you about a specific role or you contact us to explore opportunities, we want you to experience our commitment to providing a seamlessly professional, constructive, integrity driven service where we care about our engagement with you.

[Association of Executive Search Consultants](#) (AESC) members and their people are guided by a Code of Professional Conduct and Professional Practice Standards.

The AESC Code of Professional Conduct is summarised through these critical values:

- **Ethics & Integrity**
 - We put integrity above all else
- **Excellence**
 - Excellence guides the work we do
- **Objectivity**
 - We exercise independent, objective judgement
- **Diversity & Inclusion**
 - We know the power of diverse talent and inclusive cultures
- **Confidentiality**
 - We safeguard any confidential information entrusted to us

To read the full AESC Code of Professional Conduct, please [click here](#).

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If ever you feel we have not lived up to this Code of Professional Conduct, please tell us. We want to know. Email our Managing Partner at David.Evans@watermarksearch.com.au

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