



# AHCWA NEWS

Proudly produced by the Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia | December 2009

## from our Chairperson

VICKI O'DONNELL



It's hard to believe that we are at the end of another busy year at AHCWA. This year has seen some significant achievements for our sector. Notably:

- AHCWA has embraced a consensus model, where the Aboriginal health sector will no longer act in an internally competitive manner. Instead, we will speak with one voice to achieve more targeted outcomes, which is critical for our member services. As well, AHCWA and its member services will formalise a 'Statement of Commitment' and a 'Member Service Charter' between AHCWA and its members.
- Financially, we are working towards a model of global, multiyear funding, and we have had early support for this from the Commonwealth Government. This model will allow funding to be more efficiently and effectively directed to AHCWA's member organisations. Work will continue on this in 2009/10.
- AHCWA is pleased to announce that its Board has endorsed the establishment of a youth chapter including the representation of youth on AHCWA's Board. This is an important development and it will bring with it better engagement with young people from our communities as well as support for emerging leaders in the ACCHS's sector.

AHCWA has produced a Strategic Plan which clearly articulates our role and aspirations. This will be distributed to key stakeholders together with our Annual Report.

AHCWA will continue to advocate for the rights and entitlements of all Aboriginal Western Australians.

We will need to work smarter and more closely if we are to meet the contemporary and emerging challenges for our families and communities within our individual jurisdictions and nationally. AHCWA and its member services are up to the task. We will continue to welcome cooperation and collaboration with our traditional allies, particularly the NT and Qld and of course we are always open to other strategic alliances where there is a shared appetite for joint action or where it just makes good sense to do so, for example a Tri State strategy for the management of end stage renal disease. And it is time we take collective responsibility for effective action at the national level. It is only through such means that we can hold Governments to account and ensure that we lead the effort needed to produce genuine, equitable and sustainable improvements for our peoples.

AHCWA would like to take this opportunity to congratulate Mr Justin Mohamed following his election as the Chair of NACCHO and our own, Glenda Humes (SWAMS) as the Deputy Chair. AHCWA looks forward to a renewed and reinvigorated partnership with NACCHO.

I would like to wish all Board Members, staff, member ACCHSs and stakeholders the very best for Christmas and the New Year, and I look forward to having a successful 2010 with you all.

## AHCWA Farewells CEO

Four years of dedicated service were acknowledged when AHCWA CEO Darryl Kickett resigned from his position in September to take a key role in the recently established Nyungah Health Council.



The best testament to Darryl's contribution to our sector is to observe how AHCWA has gone from strength to strength during his term as CEO. He will be sorely missed by all.

Darryl also made tireless efforts in developing good relationships with the State and Commonwealth Governments. WA Indigenous Affairs Minister, The Hon. Dr. Kim Hames wished Darryl all the best in his future endeavours, and indicated he looked forward to continuing regular attendance at AHCWA meetings and working with the new CEO.

Commonwealth Indigenous Health Minister, The Hon. Warren Snowdon, who has known Darryl for around 25 years, was impressed by Darryl's commitment to his people and the need for justice and the recognition of their rights as first Australians.

"That commitment has been reflected in his journey over those years, in the work that he has done to make a material difference, to the improvement in services and the living conditions experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians," the Minister said.

"His work with AHCWA has been evidence of his lifelong commitment and will be further reflected in his new role in which I'm sure he will be a great success".

AHCWA Chairperson Vicki O'Donnell said Darryl's hard work and dedication was greatly appreciated.

Terry Brennan, Chief Executive Officer of the Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service stepped in as the acting CEO for AHCWA until the position is filled (announcement expected imminently).

### In this issue:

- ▶ Farewell to Darryl Kickett
- ▶ Minister Snowdon's trip to Derby
- ▶ Say No To Smokes
- ▶ Featured Member Service – SWAMS



# IN BRIEF

## STAFF CHANGES AT AHCWA

AHCWA welcomes Barbara Garlett to the position of Receptionist. A big thank you goes to Terry Brennan who has stepped in as acting CEO until the end of the year following Darryl's departure in September.

AHCWA would like to also say thank you and farewell to Chad Stewart who has accepted a position as Business Development Manager for the Australian Locum Medical Service Pty Ltd, Eileen Taylor, who has returned to her position as Manager of Derbarl Yerrigan's Mirrabooka branch, and Sandra Collard who is re-examining her personal priorities before deciding her next undertaking. We wish them all the best in the future.

## DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF MAORI HEALTH VISIT

Several AHCWA staff members welcomed the opportunity to hear Teresa Wall, the Deputy Director of Maori Health, Ministry of Health present 'New Zealand's Experience in Tackling Health Inequalities and Closing The Gap' during October with Dr Papaarangi Reid, Maori Public Health Physician.



The workshop highlighted New Zealand's experiences and approaches for tackling inequalities in health between Maori and non-Maori New Zealanders.

The following day, Ms Wall visited Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service for morning tea with the Board and some staff members. This was followed by a visit to AHCWA's office for an information sharing lunch where Ms Wall and AHCWA Chairperson Vicki O'Donnell exchanged gifts.



## SERVICE UPDATE – SWAMS

# Aboriginal Health Workers for the South West

Six Aboriginal health workers are studying for their Certificate III in Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care in Bunbury.

The South West Aboriginal Medical Service (SWAMS) is providing both theoretical and practical training, in partnership with the sector's Registered Training Organisation.

The full time training commenced at the beginning of May at the training room in Sandridge Road, Bunbury, with the clinical placements at the SWAMS Clinic located at the South West Health Campus. The graduation ceremony will be held in Bunbury in December.

All trainees had different reasons for undertaking the course, yet the common threads were serving their community in a culturally safe manner, and working for a very professional and caring organisation.

So keep an eye out in the community for our newest professional health workers!



# Minister Snowdon Visits Derby

The Commonwealth Minister for Indigenous Health, Rural and Regional Health and Regional Services Delivery, the Honorable Minister Warren Snowdon visited Derby to attend a community consultation session in response to the National Health and Hospital Reform Commission Report.

The session was one of many being held around Australia and was conducted at the Derby Civic Centre.

Minister Snowdon arrived the day prior to the session, and requested the opportunity to visit two remote Aboriginal Community Controlled Service clinics. The visits were to the Pandanus Park Community and the Jarlmadangah Burru Community.

The following morning Minister Snowdon toured the Derby Aboriginal Health Service (DAHS) with CEO Vicki O'Donnell and Chairperson Maxine Armstrong, where he met staff and also patients from the dialysis unit. Minister Snowdon was also shown the location for the proposed new 10 bed dialysis unit.

At the community consultation session, Minister Snowdon and guests were welcomed by Warwa and Nyikina elders as well as a fantastic performance from the Jarlmadangah Burru Community children.

After the session, Minister Snowdon met with key staff and Board members from our Kimberley ACCHSs at the Derby Aboriginal Health Service.

The visit was highly significant in ensuring the Minister was aware of the current status of Aboriginal health in the region.





## Quality Practice for Healthy Communities Workshop

Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHSs) from across WA came together on 16th and 17th September at the Vines Resort in Perth for the 'Quality Practice for Healthy Communities Workshop'.

The first day focused on the clinical aspects of providing a quality service with Dr Michael Civil from AGPAL discussing the third edition of the RACGP Standards for General Practice and the differences from previous standards. Teri Snowdon from the RACGP also spoke about the RACGP's Quality Framework for General Practice.

Afternoon presentations focused on clinical governance, managing patient complaints and the new Practice Incentive Payments available to ACCHS

as part of the recent COAG announcement. Lyn David from the Office of Safety and Quality in the WA Department of Health gave an overview of the Clinical Governance Framework in place within the WA Health Department and its potential application to primary health care.

Clinical governance, its application to the ACCHSs and relationship to accreditation was a hot topic for discussion and will lead to AHCWA and the sector trying to develop a discussion paper. The paper will aim to explore what clinical governance framework in our sector would look like. This framework would need to incorporate concepts of 'culture' and 'community' relevant to holistic primary health care that are currently lacking in quality and clinical governance frameworks in place across the country.

Day two focused on the corporate aspects of providing a quality service with the Western Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry. This included

outlining the duties, obligations, regulations and risk management associated with Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) for employers, and then examining some of the new changes to the Industrial Relations landscape under 'Fair Work Australia'.

It was advised that given the degree of difference between each ACCHS in WA, the only way of clearly establishing whether a service is a Constitutional or Non-Constitutional Corporation is for that service to seek an independent legal opinion.

Feedback on the workshop was extremely positive and AHCWA is keen to repeat the workshop in 2010. Some of the key topics identified by participants for the next workshop included: better use of Medicare, leadership and management in ACCHS, collective bargaining, staff remuneration, contract law and financial management. Presentations from the workshop are available to AHCWA members on the website [www.ahcwa.org.au](http://www.ahcwa.org.au).

## STAFF PROFILE - ANNE MARIE MCHUGH

AHCWA staff are from a variety of backgrounds, but we have the common purpose of doing our best to improve Aboriginal health outcomes throughout Western Australia. In each newsletter, we will include a profile on a staff member to let our stakeholders know more about us and how we operate.

This edition, we feature Anne Marie McHugh, our Maternal and Child Health Officer, who writes:

“I was born just outside London, however all my family are Irish. I have been a midwife since 1989 and have worked in a wide variety of tertiary and community settings. Last year, I completed my Masters in Midwifery, and working as the Maternal and Child Health Officer has been a wonderful opportunity to see the great commitment that AHCWA and its member services have to improving the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal people in Western Australia.”





# T&D Graduation



On the 23rd of October the Training and Development Centre had their first graduation in the Pilbara. Seven Certificate III in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Work and two Certificate IV students graduated.

On the 6th of November fourteen students from around the state graduated in Perth with their Certificate IV in Frontline Management. We would like to thank Terry Smith, Manager of Education and Training at the Aboriginal Health College (AH&MRC NSW) for his hard work and support in the delivery of this course.

On the 3rd of December the Training and Development Centre will hold its final graduation for metropolitan Certificate III and Certificate IV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Work at Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service.



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Advice: This newsletter may contain images and voices of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who may have passed away.



## Beyond The Big Smoke Update

At the recent AHCWA Board meeting, the Board resolved to adopt a smoke free policy for the AHCWA site.

The Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia (AHCWA) and Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services Council (KAMSC) have combined to deliver a tobacco control project known as 'Beyond the Big Smoke' (BtBS).

Funded by The Australian Respiratory Council and Healthways, the project aims to work specifically with WA ACCHSs to reduce the use of tobacco in Aboriginal Communities. All WA ACCHSs have a formalised Tobacco Control policy in place, with most currently being reviewed and updated in line with current health trends. Baseline results indicate the majority of ACCHSs staff are non-smokers, nearly 40 per cent never smoked and 24.5 per cent are no longer smoking. The remaining third of staff surveyed are current smokers. Around 75 per cent of current smokers are looking to quit in the next six months, and almost 60 per cent are planning to quit within the month.

In ACCHSs where a written policy or rules around tobacco use at work exist, it is indicated that 82.5 per cent of smoking staff had thought about quitting in the next six months. In comparison to ACCHSs with no such policy or rules, the rate is

lower, with 50 per cent considering quitting in the next six months.

Nearly all Aboriginal Health Workers (AHW) surveyed agreed that smoking was a problem in their community, and around two-thirds ranked smoking among the top three health problems.

Other findings showed:

- Whether or not the health worker smoked did not significantly affect how often they discussed quitting with clients.
- Being a smoker appeared to have an impact on the actual delivery of quit advice. Non-smokers were twice as likely as smokers to say that they felt confident discussing quitting with clients, with many smokers worried they would be seen as hypocrites.
- Staff who did not smoke were around 1.5 times more likely than smokers to deliver smoking cessation advice.
- Other barriers identified to discussing quitting smoking were the mood of those in the local population, the fear that rapport with clients would be undermined, the belief that quitting is a matter of personal choice, limited time, large workload and the belief that locals were already under enough stress.

More AHWs are choosing to lead by example and cease smoking for both their own health benefits and that of their families and communities.



### Got a story to tell?

Would you like to submit an article or story idea for AHCWA News? No problem – simply email us on [newsletter@ahcwa.org](mailto:newsletter@ahcwa.org)