



# AHCWA NEWS

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## Developing New Health Leadership Sector Workshop

Parliamentarians, key Federal and State leaders in Aboriginal health and statewide media were among over 150 people who attended the AHCWA's Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector Annual Conference held in March 2009.

"Developing New Health Leadership" was the theme of the conference, with other key priorities including developing a State Aboriginal Health Framework Agreement and channeling Council of Australian Governments (COAG) funding through this agreement.

For the first time, the Office of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health (OATSIH) First Assistant Secretary Lesley Podesta attended and presented at the WA Sector workshop. This was also the first time she had met and attended a conference of this nature in Perth with AHCWA members. Ken Wyatt, Executive Director of the WA State Government Office of Aboriginal Health, presented with Ms Podesta on the COAG initiatives for Aboriginal Health.

The resolution from this was that allocations of COAG funding should be channeled through the AHCWA/State/Commonwealth Aboriginal Health Framework Agreement and then funneled through to Aboriginal Medical Services via the planning process that the framework agreement provides.

AHCWA's support in developing and implementing the Aboriginal Health Framework Agreement will impact positively on COAG 'Close the Gap' targets by Aboriginal Medical Services (AMSs) and directly improve health outcomes for Aboriginal people, families and communities.

With regard to the WA State Suicide Prevention Strategy; recent Aboriginal community suicide crisis situations in Narrogin, Albany, the Kimberley and whole of State statistics highlighted the horrific circumstances facing Aboriginal people, families and communities across WA. The need for an Aboriginal specific, Aboriginal community controlled strategy to prevent further suicide has wide spread support too. Aboriginal health and wellbeing service providers as well as consumers were keen to listen to the State Governments plan and commitments to work in partnership with the Aboriginal community controlled sector. Further genuine consultation and ongoing regular updates for the Aboriginal Medical Services were called for and agreed to by the Hon. Helen Morton MLC; Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister for Mental Health.

The resolution from this was that AHCWA must continue to pursue the partnership with the State Government with development of the State Suicide Prevention Strategy. Information must also be provided to all the Aboriginal community controlled health services and substance use services throughout the process.

WA Country Health Service CEO, Kim Snowball, spoke about future directions and partnerships with the Aboriginal community controlled health sector. Priority issues in relation to COAG funding were outlined for rural and remote areas, and commitments to crisis response through WACHS was reiterated for Narrogin.

AHCWA will pursue an Aboriginal Health Framework Agreement with WACHS that provides for the development of new partnership arrangements in the delivery of primary health care services in rural and remote areas. Strong partnership meetings must continue in relation to Narrogin Community objectives and for priority issues in all regional Aboriginal communities.

## from our CEO

AHCWA has been successful in re-establishing and building our capacity to provide support services to our sector. Now, even greater challenges have been placed before us while we continue to develop as an affiliate and work towards maximum potential.

However, new challenges will serve to provide a springboard for AHCWA to become the leading authority in Aboriginal Principal Health Care next to Government.

Our challenges include:

- Teasing out the roles and functions of AHCWA with State and Commonwealth Governments in ways that will establish AHCWA as a valued partner in Closing the Gap on Indigenous Life Expectancy within 20 years.
- Underpinning this is the negotiations that need to take place on the Commonwealth Government's statement of intent in Closing the Gap on Indigenous Life Expectancy, the tripartite framework agreement on Aboriginal health and a bilateral agreement between the State Government, the Health Department and the Community Controlled Sector.
- Prudence Ford has been commissioned by AHCWA to work on the Strategic Plan 2009-2012.

AHCWA's board, members and staff are excited by these new developments and stand ready to participate. Clearly, some key focus areas in Closing the Gap on Indigenous Life Expectancy need to be youth leadership, child and maternal health, chronic disease management, health promotion and regional development approaches to addressing health priorities.

I would like to thank our members, sector workers, staff and board for their ongoing commitment and acknowledge our partners at the Commonwealth and State level in working together to Close the Gap on Indigenous Life Expectancy.

I would also like to use this opportunity to welcome our first Associate Member Ngunytju Tjitji Pirni Aboriginal Corporation.

**Darryl Kickett**

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# IN BRIEF

## NEW STAFF AT AHCWA

AHCWA is pleased to welcome several new staff members who have joined us in recent months.

**Katherine Dann** is AHCWA's new Administration Assistant, and **Tash Nannup** is our new receptionist. We also welcome **Karen Dunmore** as Operations Manager, and **Ingo Collard**, who is providing administrative support to the Regional Training Officers.

**Anne Marie McHugh** has accepted the position of Maternal Child Health Project Officer.

## CLINICAL NETWORK TELECONFERENCE

Increased networking opportunities have resulted from the first clinical network teleconference held in March 2009.

Organised by AHCWA's Public Health Medical Officer, Dr Tim Leahy, the conference hosted staff from Ord Valley Aboriginal Health Service, Mawarnkarra Health Service, Derby Aboriginal Health Service, Puntukurnu and Bega Gambiringu, who were welcomed by CEO Darryl Kickett.

The teleconference allowed sharing of information, ideas and questions, as well as the chance for all involved to provide brief updates on their services.

Discussions included advocating for improved GP workforce support and the emerging COAG funding opportunities. Improvements are needed in GP support, along with paying more attention to career paths. The group discussed what units should be involved in a post graduate training program or short course in Aboriginal Health for people working in ACCHSs. These include public health, medical education, clinical governance and teamwork.

More ACCHSs and Dr Shane Turner will be included in the next teleconference.

## AHCWA T&D WEBSITE NOW ONLINE

The AHCWA T&D Website, [ahcwatraining.com.au](http://ahcwatraining.com.au), was successfully launched in March 2009. T&D will deliver nationally accredited and recognised course to enable service delivery to better meet the needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community by providing culturally appropriate training and development.



# Congratulations Mawarnkarra Health Service

AHCWA would like to congratulate the Mawarnkarra Health Service for becoming AGPAL accredited recently.

AHCWA continues to have an ongoing commitment to accreditation with more than 30 people from across the State attending the AHCWA Quality Management Services (QMS) joint workshop on QIC accreditation in April.



Congratulations to the Mawarnkarra Health Service staff members

# Young Emerging Leaders

Bigger and better than last year – that was the consensus of more than 150 people attending AHCWA's State Conference from metropolitan and some of the most remote regions in WA.

Providers of health services to Aboriginal people, families and communities came together with consumers, advocacy groups, peak bodies and Government to take part in great discussions, frank debates, tell personal stories and build close networks that will only continue to benefit Aboriginal health outcomes and help close the gap in Aboriginal life expectancy.

CEO Darryl Kickett said a key outcome was the need to develop, encourage and grow young leaders in our sector.

"Our Government needs to invest in this process through partnerships, and in the framework agreement that can allow funding from COAG efforts to close the gap." Mr Kickett said.

"AHCWA must select two youth board representatives, under 30 years old, one male and female to sit on our board to give a real youth perspective and opportunity to develop and nurture youth leaders."

It was also put forward by Darryl Kickett, AHCWA's CEO and Vicki O'Donnell, AHCWA's Chairperson, to establish a 'Youth Chapter'. This idea received unanimous support and AHCWA is now looking to raise funds for the development of this opportunity.

At the conference, young managers within the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector of WA prepared and presented personal and professional experiences as health managers preparing for leadership futures within the sector.

Daniel Brown, Operations Manager at Mawarnkarra Health Service in Roebourne, presented his professional journey into the experiences and qualifications gained for this management position. Comalie Manolis, CEO of the Yura Yungi Aboriginal Medical Service in Halls Creek, talked to the many personal challenges, prejudices and obstacles that were faced in her rise to the CEO position at Yuri Yungi.

**“Our Government needs to invest in this process ... to close the gap.”**  
- DARRYL KICKETT

Leadership was also the focus of a presentation from Australia's only Aboriginal Psychiatrist, Professor Helen Milroy of the University of WA. Professor Milroy discussed Aboriginal specific mental health and healing models and the relationship these have with developing strong Aboriginal community leaders. Some methods of mental health practice and healing directly contribute to developing strong Aboriginal Community leaders.

Helen Milroy indicated that Aboriginal community leaders exist and operate today within Government, health, education, families and communities across the State. Strengthening and developing Aboriginal leaders, and Aboriginal traditional ways of staying mentally healthy and healing, are mutually dependent on each other.



# AHCWA T&D Centre Begins Training

Fourteen students have become the first to study new courses at the Pilbara Training and Development Centre.

There were 12 'Certificate III' students and two 'Certificate IV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care' students. Based at Wirraka Maya Health Service in South Hedland, the campus is now home to seven students from Jigalong and five local students who have started their journey to becoming Aboriginal Health Workers.

All students had stories and reasons for choosing their paths – yet delivering health care to a community in a culturally secure manner was paramount for the Jigalong students.

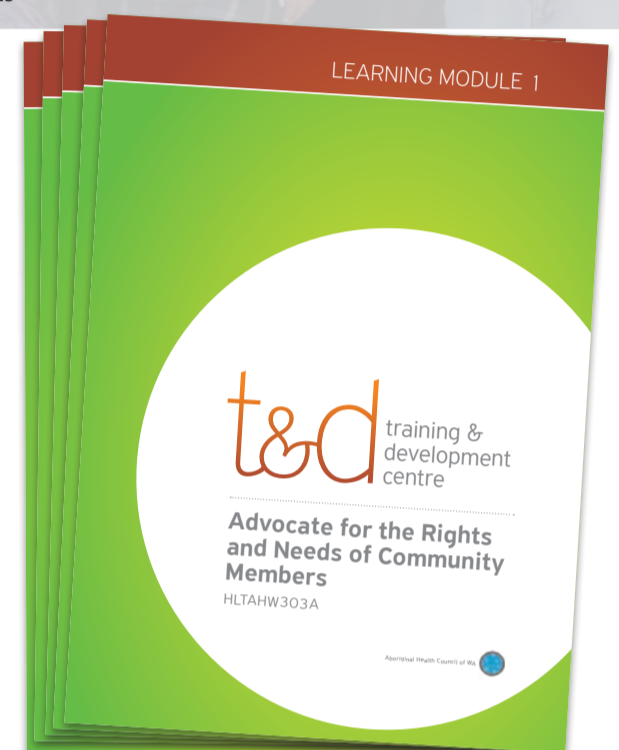
The Perth campus of the AHCWA T&D Centre has started 'Certificate III' and 'Certificate IV courses in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care'.



Cert.III & IV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care Students

The course is run in partnership with Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service, which provides the venue and has committed to providing practical placements for the students as the course progresses.

The 'Certificate IV in Frontline Management' has also started and aims to increase the management capacity of ACCHS by increasing the skills and knowledge of middle managers. A total of 21 students from throughout WA completed their first block before Easter.



## Second Minister's Meeting

AHCWA will be the lead agency in developing the new Aboriginal Health Framework Agreement between the Commonwealth Minister for Health Nicola Roxon, the State Minister for Health Dr Kim Hames and AHCWA's Chairperson.

The announcement followed the second quarterly meeting with the Hon. Minister for Health, Dr Kim Hames and the AHCWA board in Kalgoorlie on 16 April 2009, which was also attended by special guests Lt. General Sanderson (Chair Indigenous Implementation Board), Director General of Health Dr Peter Flett and Director General Department of Indigenous Affairs Patrick Walker.

Paula Arnol (Acting Chairperson AMSANT and CEO of Danila Dilba Aboriginal Health Service) met with the AHCWA board prior to the meeting to explore a strategic platform for AHCWA to take to the meeting.

The AHCWA Chairperson will join a working partnership between the Indigenous Implementation Board and the State Directors General, with the first priority being to establish whole of government targets.

AHCWA will also be establishing a research capability with assistance from Professor Fiona Stanley of the Telethon Institute of Child Health Research. The first priority task is 'Participatory Action Research' with a focus on collecting data on existing service profiles and capacity. The research will be used in the development of the proposed 'WA Investment Strategy: Expanding Health Service Delivery Initiative'.

## STAFF PROFILE - PATRICIA BUTCHER

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 Patricia Butcher, our Training Support Officer for AHCWA T&D, who writes:

"I was born in India and immigrated with my family to Australia. After arriving in Australia we lived for the first year in Perth then moved to Narrogin. My love of travel and cultures has seen me travel the world including to India in 2006 with my 2 sisters back to the town I was born. In 2007 I travelled to Nepal and worked as a volunteer in an orphanage. I am now working with AHCWA as a Training Support Officer."





# AHCWA Training Program 2009

## June

3rd – 4th	Communication – Perth
8th – 12th	Certificate IV in Frontline Management – Perth
15th – 26th	Certificate III in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (Practice) – Port Hedland
25th – 26th	Communication – Port Hedland
29th – 30th	Work With Medicine – Port Hedland

## July

1st – 3rd	Work With Medicine – Port Hedland
6th – 10th	NAIDOC Week
13th – 17th	Work With Medicine – Geraldton
20th – 24th	Work With Medicine – Perth
27th – 28th	Communication – Perth

## August

5th – 6th	Nutrition – Port Hedland
10th – 21st	Certificate III in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (Practice) – Port Hedland
17th – 18th	Men's/Women's Health – Port Hedland
21st	Pathology – Perth
24th – 31st	Certificate IV in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (Practice) – Perth (taking our the weekend)

For more information, please contact:  
Sharon Bushby or Patricia Butcher on  
(08) 9227 1631 or visit  
[www.ahcwatraining.com.au](http://www.ahcwatraining.com.au)

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



## 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)

# Update from Practitioners' Seminar

Shared patient health records, secure medical messaging and e-health were hot topics at the e-Primary Health Practitioners' Seminar held in Perth during April.

Convened by AHCWA, the event brought together primary health practitioners from the ACCHS sector, GP divisions and state and territory health departments from WA, NT and SA.

The seminar aimed to bring practitioners together to share current experiences and define shared objectives for using e-Health initiatives. These initiatives would improve the diagnosis, treatment and continuity of care in a multijurisdictional and inter-sectoral context focusing on the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

AHCWA's Board of Directors placed the emphasis of the seminar on engaging front-line organisations already delivering primary health care services to predominantly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

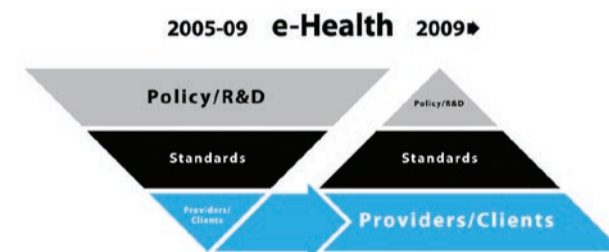
Additionally, client/provider interaction would be the driver with technology positioned as an enabler (therefore the term 'Practitioners' Seminar') and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Comprehensive Primary Health Care Services would be included as the dominant supplier of primary health care services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Seminar attendees decided that a draft Terms of Reference should be developed and circulated to enable a Cross-Jurisdictional Working Group to:

- help retain/expand funding for case studies in NT, WA and SA.
- engage with NeHTA, AHMAC/DoHA, NHMRC and COAG to fund a "pilot" roll-out of interoperability between the case studies.
- facilitate extending the existing proven SEHR and SEM solutions throughout the three jurisdictions and their sectors.

- identify and remove barriers for adoption of e-health initiatives by clinicians, clients and providers, and identify key success factors for effective engagement and change management in the Primary Health Care Providers based on experiences from the three jurisdictions.
- document key success factors for stakeholder buy-in and commitment and for installation by providers including public, private, Aboriginal Community Controlled, and Allied Health professionals.
- develop a legally robust core terminology for client and provide consent forms that can be used across the three jurisdictions.
- develop core and adaptable template policies and procedures.
- provide ongoing support – adoption, sharing experience and actively engaging colleagues (extending the South Australia Cluster Model).

More information on the outcomes of the seminar, including the presentations, is available on the e-Health Seminar page under Events at [www.ahcwa.org](http://www.ahcwa.org).



[left to right] Amanda Hand from Danila Dilba Health Service, Greg Henshcke from AMSANT and Claire Johansson from NT Health