



# AHCWA NEWS

Proudly produced by the Aboriginal Health Council of Western Australia/March 2011

## ARC Linkages - Goanna Survey

A new groundbreaking survey being carried out over 2011-2013 will provide valuable insight into certain health issues among 16-29 year old Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The ARC Linkage Grant Project - now officially known as the "Goanna Survey" - is the first Australian National study assessing the knowledge, risk practices and health service access in relation to Sexually Transmissible Infections (STIs) and Blood Borne Viruses (BBVs) among young Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people (age 16-29). Data for the survey will be collected at Aboriginal Cultural and Sporting events in each state and territory from 2011-2013.

Examples of events include Australia/Survival day events, Aboriginal State and Territory Football and netball carnivals, spirit and cultural events and National Aboriginal and Islander Week events. Within each jurisdiction, data will be collected from two events annually (the same two events each year) to ensure a variety of participants and to ensure a mix of urban, rural and remote participants.

The Goanna Survey was conducted at its first chosen event for the year, the Too Solid Music Festival on 26 January 2011 at the Supreme Court Gardens Perth.



Katherine Dann & Rekisha Eades



ARC Linkage Survey Collectors

Eight volunteers assisted with the survey collecting, with the event kicking off at 11am with the first survey completed at 11.15am.

People slowly started rolling in to see what the survey was all about, and by 2pm, about 50 surveys were completed.

Around this time, an announcement was made over the PA system letting everyone know about the survey and encouraging them to drop by the tent to complete one. People then started flooding in to complete the survey - and it got to the point where there was a line up to use the Personal Digital Assistants on which the surveys were being collected.

By 4pm, over 120 surveys had been completed.

Everyone who completed the survey went into a raffle for two fantastic prizes. First prize was an Apple iPad and second prize was an Apple iPod. The prizes were raffled at 4.30pm and by this time there were around 137 surveys.

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**DES MARTIN**

## From Our CEO

This does not mean that AHCWA has not been involved in the discussions and developments that have been occurring at a State and National level on the proposed new nationwide network of Medicare Locals and Local Hospital Networks.

AHCWA has been engaged, collaborating with the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) and other State and Territory Peak Aboriginal affiliates, addressing the key issues and concerns and the likely impact that the reform agenda will have on the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector.

What has become apparent throughout our discussions at a National and State level is that in most cases, consultation with the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector to date has been a mere formality as decisions appear to have already been made.

The first group of Medicare Locals and their associated branch offices will begin operating in mid 2011, with the remainder starting in mid 2012.

The Divisions of General Practice have been confirmed as the current infrastructure to become medical locals in the first wave of implementation.

Going forward into 2011, AHCWA will continue to monitor and participate in discussions at a National and State level as Medicare Locals and Local Hospital Networks are being rolled out and implemented.

AHCWA has maintained the position and view throughout all communications associated to the reform agenda that the input and participation of the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector is based on pathways to Aboriginal Community Control and key principles of equity and equality, underpinned by the Government's position and view that access to good health care is a basic human right.

Watch this space!

Kaya and Greetings,

Welcome to the first edition of AHCWA's 2011 Newsletter.

We have entered 2011 after reflecting on the past year. In moving forward, it is clear that the current health sector and environment as we know it today will be very different this time next year.

On 14 February, the Prime Minister announced to the country that a Heads of Agreement had been reached between the Government and State Premiers on the National Health Reform Agenda.

On 13 February 2011, the Council of Australian Governments signed a Heads of Agreement – National Health Reform that set the shared intentions of the Commonwealth, State and Territory Governments to work in partnership to improve health outcomes for all Australians.

Although significant planning and discussions have been occurring for the last two years on the National Health Reform Agreement, until February this year, Western Australia had not agreed to the National Health Reform agreement.



# IN BRIEF

## Staff Profile - Rekisha Eades



*I'm a Noongar girl, born in Perth and have lived here all my life. My families are from the Wheatbelt and South West Regions of Western Australia. I have a partner and two beautiful girls aged 6 and 2.*

*I've previously worked as a Medical Receptionist at Derbarl Yerrigan Health Service for over three years and then went on to work as an Aboriginal and Islander Education Officer at a primary school for a year.*

*My current employment at AHCWA is as an Administration Officer. In my role, I mainly deal with workshops and travel arrangements for staff, as well as general administrative duties.*

## ► Staff Changes at AHCWA

All new staff from the last quarter has settled in well. We have two new additions with Aimee Ridgway commencing with AHCWA on the 7th February, and Kodee Sariago commencing on the 16th March. Aimee has been contracted to assist with activities to prepare AHCWA for QIC Accreditation, and Kodee is our new Admin Assistant in RTO.

We have also had a few staff members leave in the past three months. We said goodbye to Kathy Wenzel, who was our previous Admin Assistant in RTO, and we also fare welled Nic Merson, who held the WANADA/AHCWA Accreditation Portfolio. We wish all of our previous staff well in their new endeavors.

## ► AHCWA Training and Development Dates

On 3 March 2011, AHCWA commenced the new training for Certificate III in ATSI Primary Health Care. The course will run every Thursday afternoon. AHCWA will also continue the Certificate III training from last year, every Thursday morning.

On 1 and 2 February, we held our Indigenous Outreach Workers (IOW) Orientation training, with seven participants attending.

## ► Available Positions at your Service?

If any of our Member Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services have available employment and would like to advertise it on the AHCWA website, please send all advertisements to Mitesh Patel at:

[mitesh.patel@ahcwa.org](mailto:mitesh.patel@ahcwa.org)



## **Service Update: Carnarvon Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation**

### ***Closing The Gap Program: Working In With CMSAC***

Carnarvon Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation (CMSAC) has been successful in obtaining funds for a program that will create better access for our clients in outreach areas. This is an important step in working towards healthier and longer lives for Aboriginal people. CMSAC's main focus is on the clients of the CMSAC community, and that we all have an equally important role in increasing and maintaining the health of our CMSAC community.

At the moment, we are developing our programs and getting a strong idea about our roles in Closing The Gap program. We have guidelines to follow for our program areas and our target groups to report back to our funding body.

We are currently waiting for community meetings to ask our outreach team what they see their health access needs to be. In the meantime, we are developing other programs that we know we will be doing, as mentioned below. We need to re-advertise the positions for the program, so until we get all the staff on board, we will be doing the best we can with the resources that we have.

We are organising a "Closing The Gap" Wall, where we would like to invite as many people as possible to come over to Stuart Street, in Carnarvon and put your hand print on our wall as a contribution to working together in Closing The Gap. It will be ready soon.

### ***Outline of the Closing The Gap Program at Carnarvon Medical Service Aboriginal Corporation***

#### **IECD - antenatal**

Helen Capewell is the key person in this program.

This is the antenatal program targeting young women.

Areas to be covered will include:

- Antenatal screening
- Education on the importance of clinical care during pregnancy
- Sexual health
- Harm reduction in alcohol and tobacco consumption
- Health education programs
- Workshops
- Support groups
- Immunisations for outreach.

#### **OUTREACH**

All staff are involved in this program. We plan to visit Gascoyne Junction one day a week.

- Clinics: we have the use of the hospital mobile clinic which we will take out twice a month. Eventually we would like to have an evening clinic.
- Screenings
- Chronic disease management
- Men's health
- Women's health
- Antenatal
- School health
- Social and emotional well being
- Health education programs.



## HEALTHY YOUTH

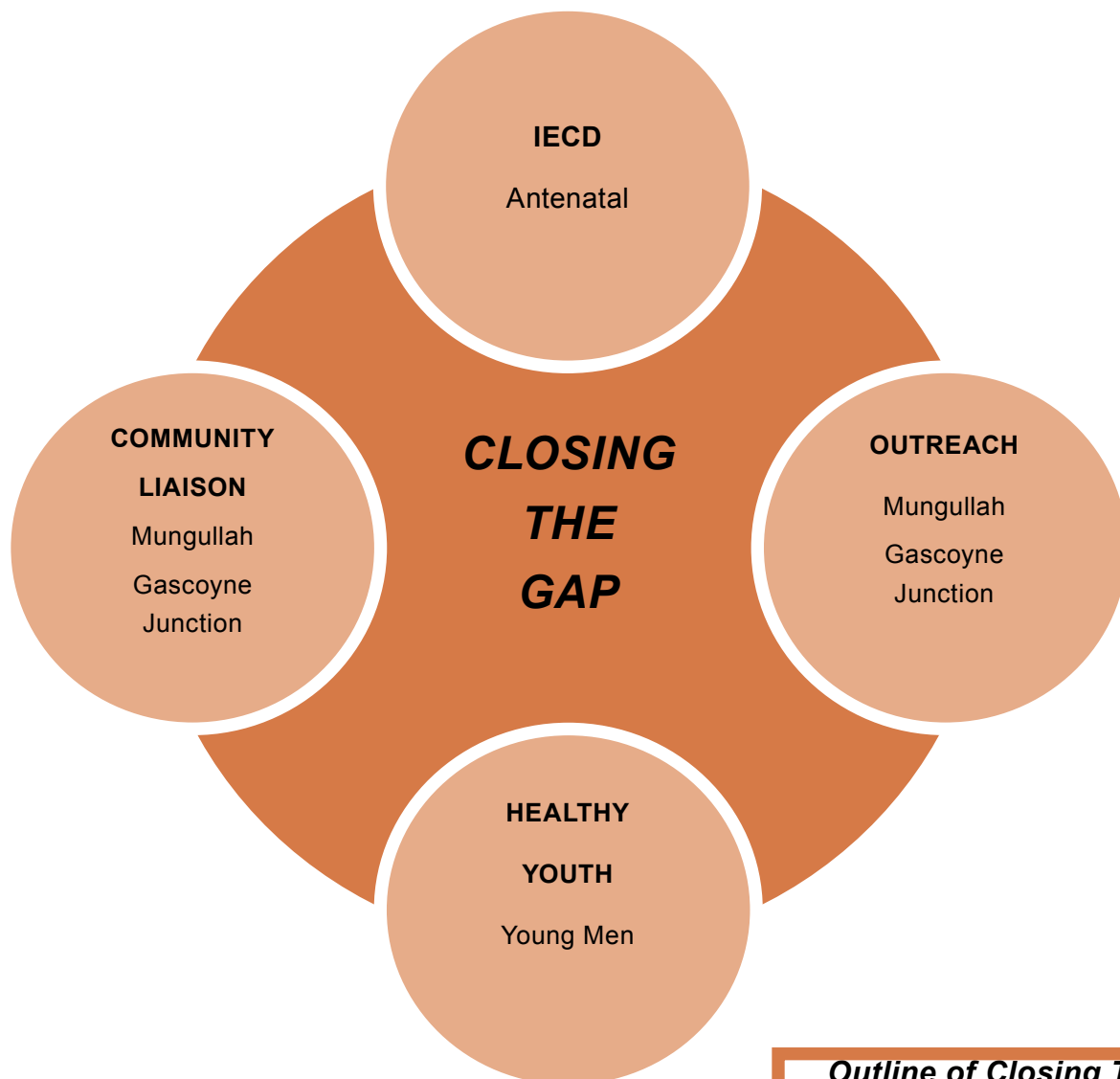
This program targets young men. Areas to be covered will include:

- The main delivery of this program will be with male health clinics firstly at Mungullah and Gascoyne Junction. When possible, we will also bring the male clinic to Carnarvon
- Health education programs
- Support groups
- Workshops / bush trips / camps
- Social and emotional wellbeing.

## COMMUNITY LIAISON

Darren is our transport officer to outreach.

The actual liaison role is not yet filled. When available, this person will liaise with health services to ensure a smooth journey for the patient through the health system and back home.



***Outline of Closing The Gap  
Program at Carnarvon Medical  
Service Aboriginal Corporation***



# Service Update: Puntukurnu Aboriginal Medical Service

**The delight in Kiri Munro's voice was great to hear as the Registered Nurse at the Puntukurnu Aboriginal Medical Service (PAMS) clinic in Kunawarritji came online with Communicare, in real-time.**

All four PAMS clinics at Jigalong, Parnngurr, Punmu and Kunawarritji are now working live off the same Communicare server located in Newman.

Those with clinics based in the metro area or in regional and rural towns might say "So what?"; but 750 km east of Port Hedland, getting an internet connection that is sufficiently robust to support Communicare has been a challenge.

The only connections available to the internet at the PAMS' clinics are via satellite links. Extremes of heat and cold in the desert, violent winds, dust storms and the occasional cyclone have been the downfall of previous attempts to operate economical domestic links. The need for change to industrial strength telecommunications was an immediate priority for client safety, to support the health workers, ENs, RNs and GPs in their delivery of services and to improve Medicare income.

PAMS returned to community control in July 2009. In 2009-2010, the Board focused on rebuilding the Board, engaging with the communities, re-establishing consistent service delivery, appointing a full-time CEO, rebuilding the administrative infrastructure of the Service, including moving offices in Newman, and employing a consistent complement of staff. For 2010-2011, the focus is on strengthening community engagement, health promotion and service delivery, and improving the state of clinic buildings, leading to RACGP Accreditation through AGPAL.

A component of the service delivery has been to upgrade tele-communications to support the clinicians and provide reliable internet access in staff housing. While under administration, PAMS' clinicians faxed patient information to Newman where it was transcribed into Communicare. In April 2010, the Communicare server was moved from Newman to Jigalong and notebook computers were loaded with Communicare off-line for the very remote clinics. The notebooks were sent to Jigalong on the mail plane for weekly synchronisation.

In September 2010, the Board decided to install a new satellite communications system based on advice from the AMSANT technical team who has been deploying such systems for remote clinics in the Territory and Ngaanyatjarra Lands in WA.

Logistics for even getting the equipment to Newman, let alone out to the communities, was a nightmare. Each satellite base required 600kgs of cement for weights, and that was just the beginning. To get the items in place required driving 5,000 kms on dirt roads, mostly at night to keep to schedules. No kangaroos were harmed, although driving the Troopies such distances was crippling - coins had to be tossed to decide who would have the comfort of the Nissan Patrol!

Servers were established in Newman to support Terminal Services and real-time access to Communicare through ThinPoint clients.

All computers were upgraded to be on the same version of operating system, Windows7 Professional. The system went live in December 2010 with all connections working by 6 January 2011.

Access to PathWest reports is now immediate as is viewing x-rays and other images along with the reports through Global Diagnostics.

A real benefit is also being realised for the Registered Nurses who are now completing CRANA courses on-line to maintain their registration from home.



**Satellite at Puntukurnu Aboriginal Medical Service**



As part of a collaboration with UWA, the web-based patient information system Medical Messaging Exchange (MMEx) is being installed in February 2011 as the starting point for better support of medical images for eyes, ears and wounds, and medication management, along with enabling Shared Individual Electronic Health Records (SIEHR). The first SIEHR links will be to the Kimberley ACCHS by Easter, if all goes well.

PAMS has used its self-generated income to establish the satellite links and limited funding through the WA WACHS, COAG-CTG for improving the patient journey and for enhanced support for chronic disease management and child and maternal health.

PAMS is on-track to realising the Board's vision of making the transition from faxed paper records, to real-time client clinical information, to shared electronic health records, in one year. All these actions would not have been possible without the commitment of the clinical staff, permanent and locums, to embrace the process by putting up with all the logistical and teething problems of so many changes in such a short period of time. Many thanks!

Contact: Chris Renshaw [pams.ceo@puntuturnu.com](mailto:pams.ceo@puntuturnu.com)

Please see also [www.puntuturnu.com](http://www.puntuturnu.com)



*Server at Puntuturnu*

*Aboriginal Medical Service*

## AHCWA Accreditation Update

The 2011 year commenced with a Quality Improvement information session for all staff on Tuesday 11 January. The topic of the information session was "systems, procedures and policies". The aim of the information session was to further raise awareness with staff that effective systems support sustainable quality performance. The AHCWAs' preparation towards becoming accreditation ready will ensure that those systems support the work of staff, support the effective functioning of the organisation, and ensure that the organisation's structure and environment encourages staff responsibility, initiative and cooperative work practices.

Quality improvement activities over the last few months have included:

1. An extensive review of existing AHCWA forms and documents as well as the creation of a variety of new forms;
2. Workshopping a communication strategy to ensure that AHCWA communicates effectively with members, community, and stakeholders using a variety of mediums, and
3. A review of the AHCWA Policy and Procedures Manual.

The final stage of the forms and documents' review includes the SMT review and final approval, followed by a staff in-service to discuss the forms and documents. The forms will then be added to the forms register.

Further to the communication strategy workshop, a Communications Policy will be created to accurately reflect the tools and methods of communication used by the organisation.

The revised AHCWA Policy and Procedure Manual will be presented to the Board for their consideration at the first scheduled Board meeting of 2011. Once the Manual is endorsed by the Board, staff will be informed, and an electronic copy will be included on each employee's desktop, as well as a hard copy at the reception.

In service sessions, with a focus on accreditation readiness activities are scheduled to occur at least once a fortnight over the coming months.

AHCWA

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**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)



**Aboriginal Health Council of  
Western Australia**

**March 2011**