



AHCWA NEWS

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

We have moved!



The Aboriginal Health Council of WA has a fantastic new home in Dilhorn House – the iconic building on Bulwer Street that was the original home of Sir William Thorley Loton, Lord Mayor of Perth from 1901-1903.

Consequently, the building represents a symbol of moving to a new level of cooperation with State and Federal health authorities for improving service delivery in WA's Aboriginal health sector.

AHCWA Chairperson Vicki O'Donnell officially opened the building in June, which was attended by Board, staff, stakeholders and Members of AHCWA. The new premises provide AHCWA's expanding staff numbers with the much-needed space to effectively undertake their day to day work.

"Our previous offices were cramped and fairly restrictive, so we are fortunate now to be able to conduct our federal and state activities in a more professional and spacious environment," Vicki said. "Our staff work hard, and they certainly appreciate the bigger environment."

Our new address is 2 Bulwer St in East Perth. All other details remain the same, including our phone number and postal address. See back page for full details.

from our CEO



The move to our fantastic and spacious new home has spearheaded a busy and exciting time for AHCWA since our last newsletter.

The signing of a Statement of Intent between AHCWA and the Premier during May was also a significant highlight. Signed by the Premier, the Health Minister and the Shadow Health Minister, the Statement of Intent aims to set;

- the target of 'closing the gap', on Aboriginal disadvantage: to close the 17 year gap in life expectancy within a generation, and to halve the mortality rate of Aboriginal children within ten years.
- the Statement commits all parties to developing a comprehensive, long-term plan of action that is targeted to need, evidence based and capable of addressing inequities in health services, in order to achieve the close the gap goals. Parties are committed to measuring, monitoring and reporting on their joint efforts in accordance with a range of supporting sub targets and benchmarks.

AHCWA has secured a meeting with the new Commonwealth Minister for Indigenous Health Warren Snowdon to outline our proposal to access Commonwealth funding for a WA Investment Strategy based on per capita funding.

AHCWA has been working with Lieutenant General Sanderson to establish Regional models of health service across the state. AHCWA is looking to become the second jurisdiction to establish such models in Australia.

ACCHSs in the metropolitan, Mandurah and South West regions have joined to establish the Nyoongar Health Council, which had its inaugural meeting in Mandurah recently.

We are pleased to announce that OXFAM has agreed to continue their close working partnership with AHCWA. AHCWA's partnership with OXFAM has also been productive at the National level.

- We participated in the 'new architecture' discussion coordinated by NACCHO which influenced the National Health Hospitals Commissions final report for a new statutory body to purchase all primary health services for Aboriginal people across Australia
- OXFAM's current funding will be accessed to allow

further development of the 'new architecture' platform which aims to secure greater collection, analysis and control of data by the Aboriginal Community Controlled sector and its articulation with agreed performance indicators for the sector.

AHCWA has also established a COAG Technical team with representation from its Member Services and West Australian Country Health Services to consider the merit and process of the COAG initiative under consideration and provide expert advice on a preferred way forward, this will include opportunities for capacity building in the Aboriginal Community Controlled sector. Read more about this in this newsletter.

Thanks to our staff for some great achievements in such a busy time. Your commitment and teamwork will ensure we see some further excellent achievements before the end of the year.

Darryl Kickett, CEO

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- ▶ Staff Profile - Katherine Dann
- ▶ T&D Training Program



IN BRIEF

ASHLEY SPRATT

AHCWA would like to congratulate young athlete Ashley Spratt on his recent success at an international meet in Kuala Lumpur for athletics. Ashley finished fourth in the High Jump and won a silver medal with an outstanding personal best jump in the Triple Jump.



The recent recipient of two Perth NAIDOC Awards, Ashley was runner-up in the Sportsman of the Year Award and won the Youth of the Year Award (male) for 12-16 yrs. AHCWA has been following Ashley's efforts in the athletic arena since he came to our attention last year, and we look forward to continuing to follow his progress. He is a great role model for other young teenagers aspiring to athletic success. Ashley is the son of Natasha Nannup, Administration Officer at AHCWA.

MATERNAL AND CHILD HEALTH

Maternal and Child Health models of excellence have been established in selected Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) in WA.

The Geraldton Regional Aboriginal Medical Service, Mawarnkarra Health Service Aboriginal Corporation, Ord Valley Aboriginal Health Service will be focusing on building sustainable gains in the quality of maternal and child health services.

Building on their existing programs, these services will provide a centre of excellence model, which together with the Aboriginal Health Council of WA, will be responsible for capacity building with both internal and external stakeholders.

Capacity building in a model of excellence framework will ensure the long term reach of this project to the whole sector. Part of the project will involve capacity building initiatives led by the three sites, including collaboration with all ACCHSs to provide learning opportunities, sharing expertise and best-practice knowledge, and building on existing partnerships between ACCHS/ external stakeholders.

The project will also review current key indicators relevant to maternal and child health and analyse the strengths and needs in our ACCHSs.

AHCWA STUDENTS

AHCWA would like to welcome two new students to our workplace. Joseph Kaissis is originally from Broome and is currently completing his final year of Health Science at UWA. Joe is on practicum at AHCWA for approximately 12 weeks and is working on various projects here with Dr. Shane Turner.

Our other student, Shane Derschow is in his 3rd year of a Bachelor of Social Work degree studying externally at Deakin University. Due to his previous experience in the ACCHS sector Shane chose to undertake his practicum with AHCWA as he is interested in improving his skills in the areas of policy, community development and capacity building.

COAG Update

Significant progress has been made on setting up working models to effectively channel COAG funding and improve outcomes in our ACCHSs over the next three years.

In the last several months, a COAG implementation arrangement with AHCWA and its Members has been established. A COAG Technical Team has been formed on a consensus model with its Member Services that sets aside competition between our services for access to new resources in favour of making bids to greatest areas of need.

The rationale basis includes:

- Burden of disease
- Service Gaps
- Capacity to benefit
- Absence or presence of support infrastructure
- Unique challenges of providing services in WA
- Population
- Geography

AHCWA has undertaken significant consultation through Regional Planning Forums throughout the state, and has been instrumental in developing a partnership with the WA Country Health Service to work together with this planning.

This work has included identifying strategies and principles to develop planning tools, services and priorities.

AHCWA is pleased to have established this in such a short space of time with commitment and assistance from the regions. Channeling COAG funding to improve health service delivery was a key priority following AHCWA's annual planning day.

This will allow better impact of the COAG 'close the gap' targets by ACCHSs to directly improve health outcomes for Aboriginal people, families and communities.

Snapshots from AHCWA's Strategic Planning Day





Cultural Safety Facilitator Training

Aboriginal Health Workers (AHW) in South Australia and the Northern Territory are the latest to benefit from the Aboriginal Health Council of WA's Cultural Safety Training program.

AHCWA's project team conducted Facilitator Training in South Australia and Western Australia for staff in the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services (ACCHS) during June and July 2009. Staff from affiliates and ACCHSs in SA, WA and the NT learned how to improve the quality of service delivered by health care providers to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, and about the experience of service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The Cultural Safety Training (CST) package is a framework that requires local expertise and resources to be successful. CST was developed in partnership with the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP). Guided by a National Reference Group, it is housed at AHCWA.

The National CST Coordinator, Juliette Hubbard, invited Expressions of Interest for Facilitator Training from ACCHSs staff to be cultural or medical facilitators. Participants were trained to:

- assess and address facilitator learning needs related to CST;
- review the content and processes set out in the CST modules;
- discuss the training context of the CST and, in particular, characteristics of GPs and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities;



- adapt CST materials to meet the needs of the local community and GP learners attending the workshop; and
- integrate Facilitators Training Workshop activities with the need to prepare for the delivery of the CST modules.

Hopefully, all facilitators will soon have many opportunities to facilitate CST Workshops in their local areas. Visit www.culturalsafetytraining.com.au



GRAMS Aboriginal Health Workers begin the transference process

Five AHWs at GRAMS have excellent new clinical health skills that will benefit Aboriginal communities.

The group undertook the 'Work with Medicine' unit as part of the transference to the new national AHW qualification. Employed in a variety of roles within the service, the GRAMS workers demonstrated their expertise in the delivery of primary health care to the Aboriginal community.

Over the week, they learned about the quality use of medicine, policy and legislation, and the development of clinical skills, such as giving intramuscular injections. These skills were demonstrated on a model arm, and some students had the opportunity to perform the newly acquired skills on clients requiring flu vaccinations.

The students are now completing their worksheets and getting third party reports from supervising staff to receive the new national qualification by the end of the year.

The AHCWA Training and Development Centre would like to thank the GRAMS AHWs for their efforts, and acknowledge the enthusiasm they showed in tackling the assessment and upskilling process. Thanks also to Terry Brennan, Sandy Davies, Val Jones and Jenny Hall for their ongoing support and assistance in the assessment and training process.

Visit www.ahcwatraining.com.au



STAFF PROFILE - KATHERINE DANN

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 Katherine Dann, our Administration Officer, who writes:

I am originally from Broome in WA and in 2007 I started my career in health working for the Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Services Council. In January 2009 I relocated to Perth and took up my current position with AHCWA as the Administration Officer, which I am enjoying very much. I really love working in the Indigenous health sector and hope to further my career in this particular area.





AHCWA Training Program 2009

September

1st – 4th Certificate IV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (Practice) – Perth
 1st – 4th Certificate IV in Frontline Management – Perth
 14th – 18th Work With Medicine – Perth

November

2nd – 6th Certificate IV in Frontline Management – Perth
 7th Graduation

October

5th – 9th Work With Medicine – Perth
 12th – 23rd Certificate III in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (Practice) – Port Hedland
 23rd Graduation – Port Hedland

For more information, please contact:
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 (08) 9227 1631 or visit 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.

MEMBER STORY

On Friday 3rd July, Bega Garnbirringu Health Service in Kalgoorlie, Western Australia, celebrated the long term commitment of Renal Physician, Professor Mark Thomas, to the people of our community.



Mark leaves Kalgoorlie after an 18 year association with our Medical Service. During this time, Mark developed a strong bond with many of our clients, as well as staff. His cheerful and friendly manner was always well appreciated. Mark's role in the preceptorship of AHWs has been an ongoing and invaluable component of our service delivery to both renal and non-renal clients.

In recognition of his time here at Bega, Mark was presented with a Warburton Arts glass platter, produced by the Ngaanyatjarra people. We all wish Mark the very best in his future endeavours.

Written by Trudi Cornish
 Manager, Health Programs, Bega Garnbirringu Health Service



Got a story to tell?

Just like Bega Garnbirringu Health Service, you can submit an article to AHCWA News. Simply email us on newsletter@ahcwa.org

Support Available for Health Checks

Are you implementing 'Health Checks' and 'Healthy Kids Checks' programs?

If not, do you need more information about these important projects that support the early detection of risk factors and chronic disease in Aboriginal communities?

Increasing the uptake of these checks by improving the capacity of AHWs, GPs, and practice nurses to undertake these health assessments is critical in improving health outcomes in the broader population.

AHCWA now has additional resources to support a range of planned local activities to promote these checks. We want to hear from ACCHSs that may require brochures, posters, or even physical support in promoting these activities to distribute. AHCWA has funding to support physical assistance in three



locations. If ACCHSs are conducting these checks and have ideas to contribute to assist us in the uptake in other areas, their comments would also be welcome.

Resources that will assist ACCHSs in conducting the basic Healthy Kids Checks include examination and assessment of height, weight, eyesight, hearing, oral health, toileting and allergies. For Aboriginal health assessments, information can be provided on:

- examining and investigating medical history, arranging interventions and documenting simple health strategies;
- effectively communicating with Aboriginal people and understanding the cultural and health status differences with non-Indigenous people;
- information on illness and disease incident rates to improve diagnosis; and
- establish an environment that supports self-identification of illness in Aboriginal people.

Please contact Karen Dunmore at AHCWA for more information on karen.dunmore@ahcwa.org.

