



Talk-About

The official newsletter for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Leadership Team

January 2021



Cadetship Program preparing our future Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce

A collaboration between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team (A&TSILT), Metro North Allied Health and the Metro North Office of the Chief Executive has seen an Indigenous Cadetship Program successfully rolled out across Metro North.

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Give us feedback

We welcome your feedback, contributions, story ideas and details on any upcoming events. Please contact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team at A_TSIHU_MNHHS@health.qld.gov.au or phone (07) 3139 3231.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team

If you have any feedback regarding the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team services, programs and initiatives, you can contact the following:

Mail to:

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team, Building 26, Chermshire Community Health Centre, 490 Hamilton Road, Chermshire QLD 4032.

Email to:

A_TSIHU_MNHHS@health.qld.gov.au
Alternatively, call and ask for our Safety and Quality Officer on 3647 9531.

Metro North Hospital and Health Service would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners and custodians of the land on which our services are located.

We pay our respects to all Elders past, present and future and acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples across the state.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander readers are warned that this publication may contain images or names of people who have passed away.

Contact information

Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital

Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer Ph: 3646 4154 / 0408 472 385

After hours Ph: 3646 5106 / 0408 472 385

The Prince Charles Hospital

Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer Ph: 3139 5165 / 0436 690 306

After Hours Ph: 3139 6429 / 0429 897 982

Redcliffe Hospital

Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer Ph: 3049 6791

After Hours Ph: 3049 9734

Caboolture/Kilcoy Hospital

Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer Ph: 5433 8249

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Community Indigenous Primary Health Team

Manager Ph: 3360 4758 / 0419 856 253

Indigenous Sexual Health Team

Clinical Nurse Consultant Ph: 3360 4753

Indigenous Mental Health

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Caboolture Ph: 0439 732 970

Redcliffe Ph: 0407 251 890

Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Ph: 0428 404 875

Forensic Mental Health Service, Indigenous Mental Health Intervention Program

Forensic Mental Health Team Ph: 3234 0800



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A word from the Director



Sherry Holzapfel
Director, Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Health
Leadership Team

A warm welcome to 2021!

As COVID-19 restrictions eased throughout Queensland just in time for the festive season, I hope you were able to enjoy spending well deserved quality time with your friends, families and community.

We were able to get out and about more because you all did your part to reduce the spread of the virus by following the advice of the Chief Health Officer, maintaining hand hygiene and social distancing, and staying home and getting tested when feeling sick.

I was also proud to see our mob responding quickly to changes when the Greater Brisbane region went into a 3 day lockdown and were required to adhere to subsequent restrictions.

As we move into this next phase of 'living with COVID-19', it's important that we keep doing these things to care for each other and our mob. Our team will continue to prioritise our COVID-19 response to ensure you keep receiving culturally appropriate care and communications.

On a positive note, I am pleased to see the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cadetship program expand for 2021. The A&TSILT worked with the Metro North Allied Health team to ensure the success of the program in 2020 and I am personally excited to see cadetships now offered in fields close to my own heart, nursing and midwifery. Workforce initiatives such as the cadetship program are so important for providing culturally safe work environments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and mentoring our emerging workforce – the people who will be leading us and caring for us in the future.

I have mentioned previously that A&TSILT has also supported Deadly Opportunities, an initiative of the soon-to-be opened Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service (STARS). STARS is committed to Closing the Gap by providing recruitment, workforce and development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. More than 40 identified positions have been created to ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander representation will be embedded in this facility from the outset. I encourage healthcare students out in community to aim for the 'STARS' (pun intended) by applying for these and the many other great opportunities across MNHHS. We are building a culturally capable workforce where Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander employees are supported, feel safe and valued for their contribution as well as providing a culturally safe environment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing our services.

This year is set to be another busy year for A&TSILT as we deliver on initiatives that align to each of the Priority areas of the *Metro North Better Together Health Plan 2019-2022*. I look forward to working with you all and continuing to meet with our community members because after all, we are 'Better Together'.

Until next edition, stay safe, stay strong and deadly and look after each other.

Sherry Holzapfel
Director, Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Leadership Team

A word from the Chief Operating Officer



Jackie Hanson
Chief Operating Officer,
Metro North Hospital and
Health Service

Wunya! (Greetings)

My name is Jackie Hanson and I am the Chief Operating Officer of Metro North Hospital and Health Service.

Welcome to our first yarn of 2021. It is my great pleasure to contribute to this wonderful newsletter. This way of connecting with community is very important as it allows me to share with you our successes and other key information.

I'm very keen to learn more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages including welcome/greetings. In Yuggera and Gubbi Gubbi languages this is Wunya!

I understand that there are many different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages across Queensland and I'm committing to learn more as we provide care not only for our South East community, but also regional and remote communities. I recognise and respectfully acknowledge the many communities in Queensland and the spiritual connections to country.

In July last year the National Agreement on Closing the Gap was achieved between the Coalition of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peak Organisations, all state and Commonwealth Governments.

The outcomes of this agreement are:

1. Shared decision making
2. Building Community Controlled Sector
3. Improving Mainstream Institutions
4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander - led Data
5. Socioeconomic outcomes

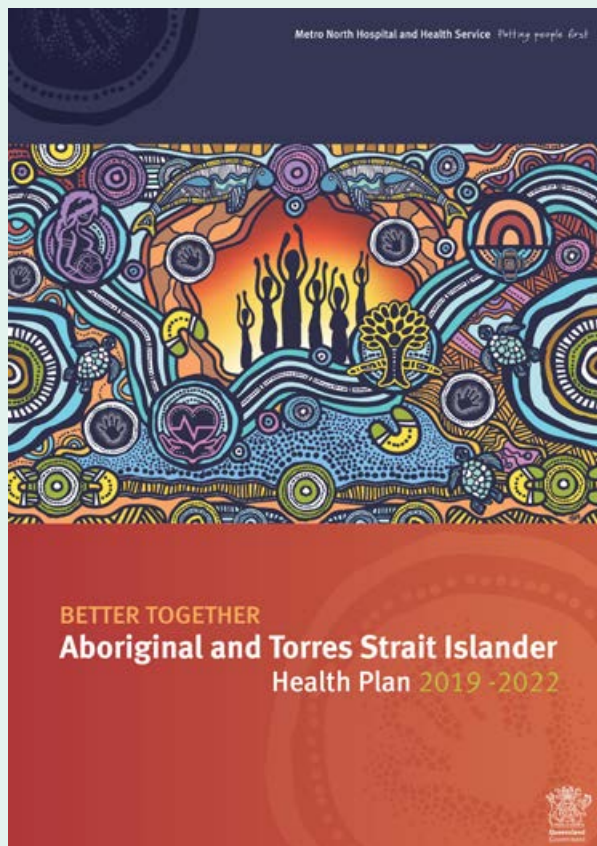
I am passionate about ensuring our actions are tangible and make a genuine impact to improve the health outcomes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I recognise that developing partnerships and relationships with community is vital to ensuring we can truly close the gap.

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Oversight Committee supports Metro North Hospital and Health Service with strategic leadership, advice and recommendations with regards to our commitment.

To help us achieve our goals, we reach out to community leaders by asking them to work with us in an advisory capacity to improve our service to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

I am delighted to advise that we have extended invitations to members of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and also a consumer voice as representatives of the Committee. This experience and insight will help the Committee to break new ground and ensure people accessing Metro North services will receive high-quality person-centred care that is culturally responsive, physically, mentally and emotionally empowering, supporting self-care and choice, and is designed to improve health and wellbeing.



As Australia's largest public health service, we recognise that our actions can influence what happens in the broader health and community sector and make a significant difference for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in our region and elsewhere.

Metro North is in the process of establishing a partnership with University of Queensland, IUIH, and department of Health Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Directorate a health research alliance designed to evaluate the success or not of activities that we undertake to draw equality to the health and well being of our aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, this is very exciting for us and I hope to bring information in future months

Guided by our *Better Together Health Plan 2019-2022*, we will continue to implement new programs and initiatives under the plan in the coming years, across our local facilities and Metro North as a community.

If you would like to be engaged or make suggestions on how we can better serve our community please email A&TSIHLT@health.qld.gov.au.

The Indigenous cadetship program supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students to successfully complete their professional qualifications while also undertaking meaningful employment within their chosen field.

The program aligns to the *Metro North Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2019 – 2022* Priority Area 1: Leadership, Governance and Workforce. A&TSILT provided a Project Officer to assist with cultural capability and recruitment support in setting up the program and continued to be an active contributor throughout 2020.

“We saw an opportunity to prepare our future workforce. Recognising we could be doing more to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, we set out to develop a cultural support program to educate Metro North staff and ensure cadets felt well supported.

“Workforce initiatives contribute to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce development, employment and retention across the Metro North Hospital and Health Service,” Sherry Holzapfel, Director of the A&TSILT, said.

Metro North's Cultural Capability Officers worked in partnership with A&TSILT to strengthen peer support and cultural capability.

“My special thanks go to Henry, Cultural Capability Officer at The Prince Charles Hospital, who worked extensively with colleagues to instil tailored Cultural Practice Program workshops,” Ms Holzapfel said.

To assist Metro North in recruiting identified cadets, a partner organisation for the project, AFL SportsReady, were contracted as a Group Training Organisation. A&TSILT worked closely with AFL SportsReady on a widespread recruitment and engagement drive with universities across Southeast Queensland which saw seven students undertake a cadetship throughout 2020.

A farewell event hosted by A&TSILT in December 2020 acknowledged the hard work and commitment of the inaugural intake and celebrated the success of the program.

Whitney, an Exercise Physiologist Cadet graduate, reflected on how working in the program helped her to break personal barriers.

“I have always worked in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health since I left school. I never saw myself working within government and I always thought I would be working in community only helping mob. I started to see the benefits of having a person like me working in a mainstream organisation and how much difference I can make to a service.

“I felt privileged to work with my mentor and the team that we worked with were very inclusive which provided room for us to grow. If we didn't have inclusiveness from the beginning, I think it would have created barriers and made it difficult to progress with that confidence.

“My advice to future cadets is to take every opportunity and don't close yourself off,” Whitney said.

The success of the program has paved the way for the program to expand in 2021 with 18 cadetships now offered Metro North wide in the areas of Dietetics, Occupational Therapy, Oral Health, Pathology, Pharmacy, Physiotherapy, Social Work and Speech Pathology. The opportunity has also been extended to students studying Nursing and Midwifery.

“The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team are invested in working with Metro North Allied Health to ensure Metro North is known as an employer of choice and provides a culturally safe workplace environment. We aim to remain connected to the universities to promote future opportunity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students studying for a career in health,” Ms Holzapfel said.

“My team look forward to strengthening the program and developing career pathway opportunities to sustain a competent, connected and capable Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce.”

We welcome the new group of cadets who are about to embark on a cadetship this year.

COVID-19 (Coronavirus)



Protecting your mental health

Introduction

As the COVID-19 pandemic is happening in Australia we understand that people may have feelings of anxiety, worry, sadness and even anger. It is important to remember that the health experts worldwide are working hard to contain the virus and treat those that have been affected.

What to do if you experience feelings of anxiety or distress

- Find a healthy balance in relation to media coverage – if you are seeing/hearing a lot of negative information this can heighten these feelings.
- Go for a walk – remember to follow the social distancing advice. Visit www.qld.gov.au/health for further information on social distancing.
- Write down your thoughts.
- Practice focused/deep breathing – try breathing in for four counts and breathing out for four counts. Do this for five minutes.
- Practice mindfulness activities.
- Be kind to yourself and others around you as it could be stressful for your loved ones too.
- Find something you can do safely to still contribute to your community – think about our Elders and families that are struggling. Give them a call or text to check in on them.
- What have you done in the past that has helped manage these feelings?

How to manage your mental health while in self-isolation

- Remind yourself that this is a temporary period of isolation to slow the spread of the virus.
- Stay connected with friends, family and colleagues via email, social media, video conferencing or telephone.
- Engage in healthy activities that you enjoy and find relaxing.
- Keep regular sleep routines and eat healthy foods.
- Maintain physical activities.
- Practice mindfulness activities.
- Limit news and social media if you find it distressing.

Who to contact if you are feeling overwhelmed or stressed

- Beyond Blue – 1300 22 4636
- Kids Helpline – 1800 551 800
- Lifeline – 131 114
- MensLine – 1800 600 636
- DV Connect – 1800 811 811
- GriefLine – 1300 845 745
- Suicide Call Back – 1300 659 467
- 1300 MH CALL – 1300 64 2255
- GP or councillor
- eMNprac – emhprac.org.au

Mindfulness activities



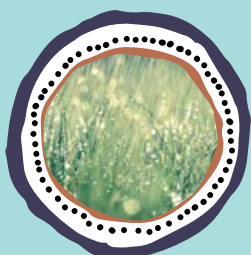
Observe a leaf for five minutes

- This exercise calls for nothing but a leaf and your attention. Pick up a leaf, hold it in your hand, and give it your full attention for five minutes. Notice the colours, the shape, the texture, and the patterns. This will bring you into the present and align your thoughts with your current experience. Pay attention to what you are holding, notice the feeling of it in your hands. Once you have noticed the texture, the weight and the colour, bring your awareness to the smell.



Mindful eating for four minutes

- Pay attention to what you are holding, notice the feeling of it in your hands. Once you have noticed the texture, the weight and the colour, bring your awareness to the smell. Finally, move on to eating, but do so slowly and with concentrated attention. Notice the taste and its texture against your tongue. This exercise may help you discover new experiences with familiar foods.



Mindfulness 5-4-3-2-1

- This is an especially great activity to help manage anxiety or anger. Look around your current surroundings and find five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste. By the time you get through listing all of those, you will be more present and calm.

Listen to music



- Play your choice of nature sounds, classical, any acoustic music or Dadirri Aboriginal Listening (www.creativespirits.info/aboriginalculture/education/deep-listening-dadirri). You can play the music while kids are doing something independently or allow kids to just sit down and relax while mindfully listening to the music.

Read a book or download reading apps

- Reading can stimulate your brain and reduce your stress and anxiety. Try and read for at least 30 minutes a day.



Colour in

- Spend some time colouring in. Colouring in reduces stress and boosts creativity. This activity can help pass time and is beneficial to your mental health.

Spotted: Haylene Grogan wearing the Better Together scarf with pride



Haylene Grogan wearing the Better Together scarf

In October 2020, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team gifted Queensland's Chief Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Officer and Deputy Director-General Haylene Grogan with a scarf featuring the Better Together artwork by artist Elaine Chambers-Hegarty.

Ms Grogan was a special guest at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Activities Showcase, an event hosted at Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital. The event brought together Executive staff from across Metro North and Queensland Health to showcase a myriad of fantastic initiatives and programs across Metro North that are positively impacting the health and wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Ms Grogan kindly praised Metro North staff who are working tirelessly on these initiatives and programs and acknowledged their efforts towards Closing the Gap.

We were thrilled to spot Ms Grogan wearing the colourful Better Together scarf with pride. Thank you, Ms Grogan, for your ongoing support and commitment to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

Care packages for the community

In the lead up to the festive season, the the Indigenous Hospital Liaison Service at The Prince Charles Hospital were busy preparing and distributing care packages to people experiencing homelessness.

COVID-19 has heavily impacted our community this year, particularly people without access to the bare necessities which play a vital role in keeping us safe and prevent the spread of the virus.

The team set out to help care for people in need by making time within their busy schedule to prepare and distribute nap sack care packages. The nap sacks include personal care and hygiene items such as tissues, anti-bacterial wipes and face masks which will assist in protecting the community throughout the pandemic.

Information factsheets and our previous Talk-About Newsletter were also included to keep community members informed about COVID-19 and the supports available. To support the physical, mental, emotional and social well-being of our community members, a wallet card including contact numbers of local community organisations and health services has been included.

Thank you to the team for caring for community members who access our healthcare services and those who may not be able to. Your thoughtfulness, compassion and dedication to your community is inspiring!



First sneak-peek at Aboriginal artwork in new STARS facility

With the Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service (STARS) official opening just around the corner, take a sneak-peek at an amazing artwork piece installed in the new fully digital hospital.

Featured in the beautiful courtyard are seven Bloodwood Totems designed and created by Aboriginal artist Ian Waldron.

“My Kurtjar clan hold their Bloodwood Totem close to their heart. It is integral to the joining of Ancestral Beings, Land, Humans and Animals,” Ian said.

Ian’s Bloodwood Totems piece is part of an artwork collaboration with artist Joanne Currie Nalingu, titled River Totem Revival. Joanne’s River Markers piece combines with Ian’s Bloodwood Totems to appear as a ‘totemic field’.

Ian is one of Queensland’s most accomplished and imaginative contemporary Aboriginal artists. For the past 15 years Ian has been creating a visual record of life on the Gulf of Carpentaria, particularly the life of people on his traditional Kurtjar country.

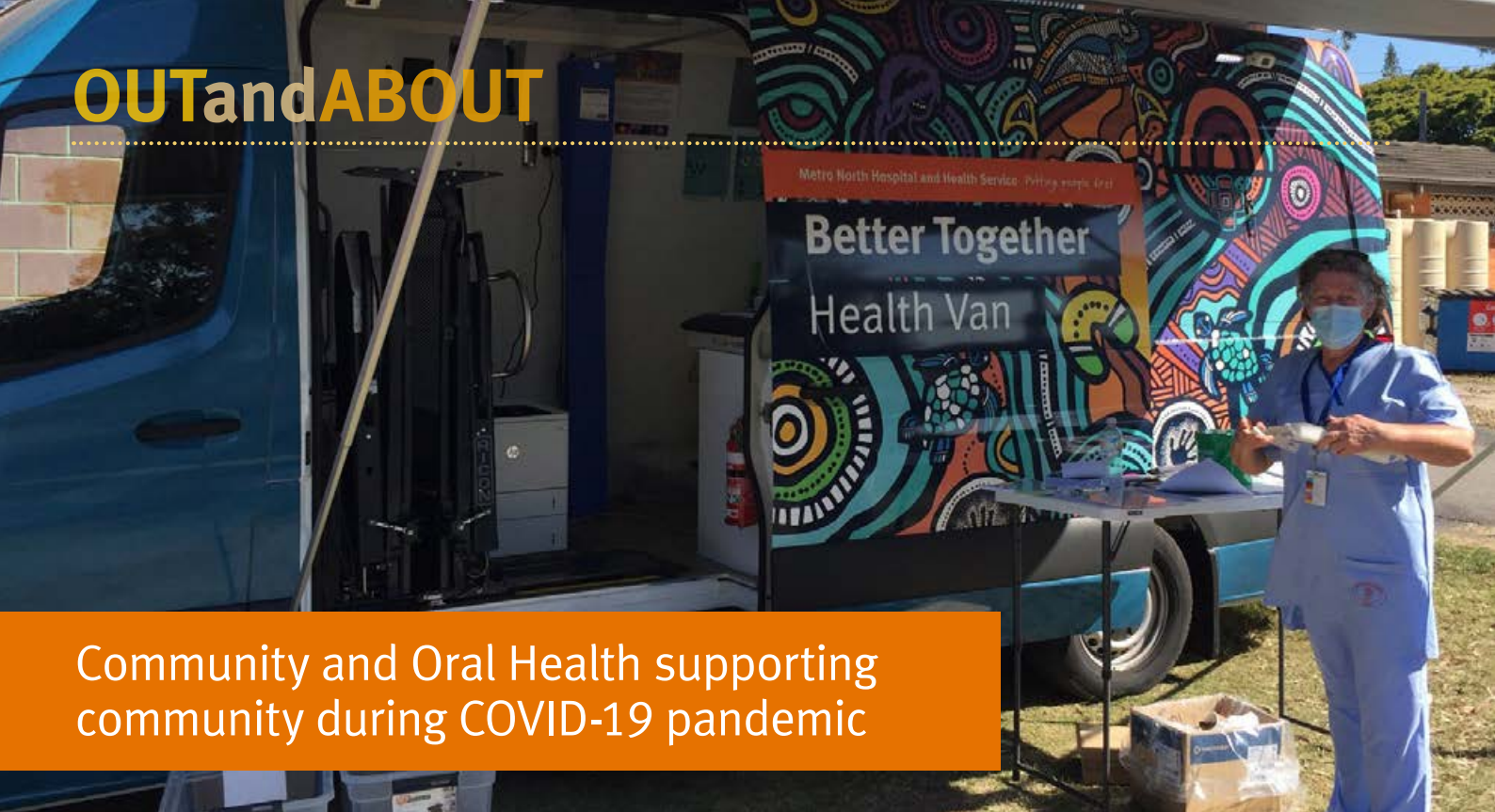
The Bloodwood Totems are of various heights and hand painted with a variety of colourful striped markings and textured patterns. Totems are a deep connection between the spirit and the physical world for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Their significance lays out directions and paints the markers towards wellbeing.

“Having been a positive source of energy for growth, healing and comfort in my own life’s journey, the Totems are the most personal and potent symbol I could offer to the patients, staff, interns and visitors spending time at the Herston facility,” Ian said.

This artwork piece is one of several significant pieces of artwork by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander artists throughout STARS for staff, patients, families, students and visitors to enjoy.



Artist Ian Waldron with his Bloodwood Totem artwork.



Community and Oral Health supporting community during COVID-19 pandemic

COH Nurse Dene working at the pop-up COVID-19 testing clinic

2020 was a year like no other. People worldwide experienced unpredictable and unprecedented events due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Here in Metro North, the largest Hospital and Health Service, all staff hit the ground running to support our community. The Metro North Community and Oral Health (COH) staff have been working in testing clinics across north Brisbane. COH has conducted more than 650 individual COVID-19 assessment screenings of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people since the declaration of the pandemic in March 2020. Ninety percent of the presentations have been at the Pine Rivers Community Health Centre located in Strathpine.

COH Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health staff Melanie and Dene have been assisting staff and community at the Pine Rivers clinic to provide culturally appropriate support and screening.

“I learnt so many new skills, and got to meet some amazing people, both staff and clients. People were very friendly and appreciated our work.

“On average, 150 people were tested a day. During the spike, we would sometimes see 170 people a day.

“Our mob have done really well in terms of keeping this global pandemic at bay and I am so grateful that there was a drive through service that they could access. Whenever someone identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander, during the registration process, the staff asked me to conduct the assessments or to assist in making it a culturally safe space for our people and that made me feel proud to be a part of such an important team, during an uncertain time for us.

“I would also like to thank the staff for their tireless effort and for what they have done for our community, keeping them safe. I particularly would like to thank my Team Leader Dene, and to Ronald for all their support and encouragement,” Melanie said.

Support from COH has not been limited to Metro North facilities. In November 2020 COH onboarded an Indigenous Nurse Navigator to assist Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people staying in hotel quarantine with their pathway to recovery, cultural support and safe return to community. The Indigenous Nurse Navigator also undertakes screening duties as part of the Pine Rivers and hotel clinics.



Advanced Indigenous Health Worker Melanie working at Pine Rivers testing clinic

The Indigenous Primary Care Team have been working hard on the ground with community providing over 140 cultural support and guidance activities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in hotel quarantine since August 2020. The team also continue to provide COVID-19 resources and packs to community to help keep mob safe.

There is an incredible amount of work that happens behind the scenes. Thank you to all staff across Metro North for prioritising the safety and health of our patients, community and each other.

OUTandABOUT



Exciting new artwork in the works

In December 2020, services relating to the Strong Start to Life Priority area of the Better Together Health Plan collaborated with Elders, community, esteemed Aboriginal artist Elaine Chambers-Hegarty and Monique Proud from Cultural Grounding at a workshop to begin an exciting Strong Start to Life artwork project.



Elaine has previously created several artwork pieces for Metro North Hospital and Health Service including the overarching Better Together artwork and individual artwork pieces for each Hospital, Community and Oral Health and Mental Health services. If you have visited our facilities, you may have noticed Elaine's vibrant and colourful artwork in places such as elevators, posters, phone booths, staff shirts and lots more.



Participants of the workshop were honoured to hear stories from strong female Elders which helped guide the workshop activities and set the scene. The overwhelming connectedness of spirit with women coming together made for a successful and engaging workshop. The women felt a strong presence of the guardian birth spirit 'Ngarrama' in the room.

All the strong women involved in the workshop are excited to be part of the journey and watch the artwork develop into a wonderful piece that will help tell birthing and paediatric stories throughout Metro North Hospital and Health Service facilities. Great conversations, ideas and suggestions were captured through workshop activities and will contribute to the final design. Other workshops will also be held to contribute to telling the whole story.

Strong Start to Life is a clinical priority area highlighted in the Metro North Better Together Health Plan. It is focused on a strong start to life for all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who live in the Metro North catchment area and use Metro North Hospital and Health services, by working with families to co-design services that improve continuity of care models, supporting timely interventions for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, babies and children that reinforces cultural knowledge and pride.

If you would like to know more you can view our Better Together Health Plan at <https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/better-together-van/better-together-health-plan>

Annual Metro North Netball Tournament

The annual Metro North Netball Tournament took place on Saturday 5 December 2020, encouraging staff from across Metro North facilities to come together for some friendly competition.

The netball tournament is held each year to encourage staff to connect with peers, build team morale and provide a fun filled day for all staff and their families.

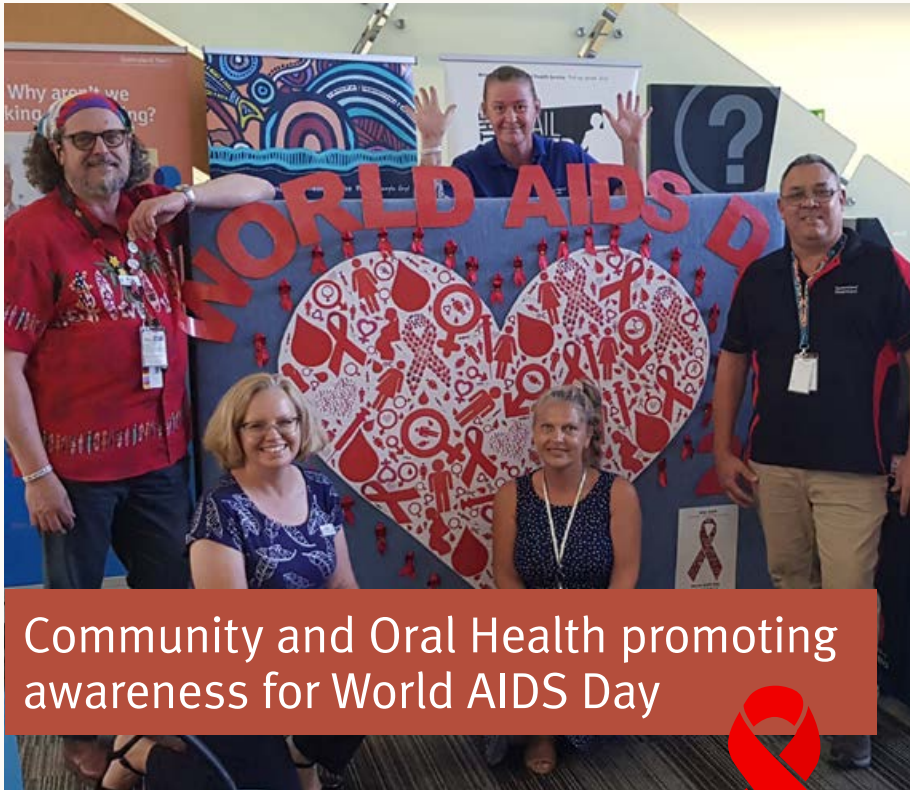
It was a hot summer day but the 'The Dreamtimers' brought the heat to the competition! This team, consisting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff from across The Prince Charles Hospital, Caboolture Hospital, Aspley Community Health Centre, Pine Rivers Community Health Centre and Brighton Health Campus, won two of the three games they played.

Go team!



'The Dreamtimers' representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at the annual Metro North Netball Tournament

OUTandABOUT



Community and Oral Health promoting awareness for World AIDS Day

Ronald Abala, Senior Indigenous Sexual Health Worker on right with Community and Oral Health Staff raising awareness for World AIDS Day

As part of World AIDS Day on 1 December 2020, the Community and Oral Health (COH) Indigenous Sexual Health Team went on a roadshow to promote public awareness on HIV/AIDS. The team travelled around COH services and facilities displaying health promotion material and information in main foyers for staff, visitors and community to view.

The theme for World AIDS Day 2020 'Now More Than Ever' aimed to encourage people to educate themselves and others about HIV; to take action to reduce the transmission and ensure that people living with HIV can participate fully in the life of community, free from stigma and discrimination.

World AIDS Day is also a day for community and services to show support for people living with HIV and to commemorate people who have died of AIDS related or other conditions associated with HIV.

Australia's HIV data over recent years indicated that Australia is leading the world in HIV prevention. In 2018 there were 833 new diagnoses of HIV which is the lowest number since 2001 and represents a decline of 23 percent since 2014.

Despite the decline in HIV diagnoses in Australia, there was a 35 percent increase in the rate of new HIV diagnoses among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ten years to 2017, with annual diagnosis rates ranging from 25 percent higher than non-Indigenous Australians to more than double.

To coincide with World AIDS Day, the Indigenous Sexual Health Team also hosted Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander HIV Awareness Week to spark conversations with community and staff about HIV prevention and the importance of regular testing for HIV.

The Indigenous Sexual Health Team received positive engagement from staff and visitors and hope to further educate staff and community to reduce burden of disease and break the stigma on infectious diseases.



Redcliffe Hospital Carpark Artwork

The Redcliffe Hospital Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) Committee have devised a clever way for patients and visitors to remember where they parked their vehicle when attending the Redcliffe Hospital.

Situated by the lifts on each level of the carpark is an eye-catching plaque featuring an animal of the sea and land which represents the Redcliffe area – the dolphin, dugong, sea turtle and pelican.

These sea and land animals have been extracted from the Redcliffe Hospital artwork, created by Aboriginal artist Elaine Chambers-Hegarty. What a fun way to navigate the Redcliffe Hospital carpark!



New Aboriginal Artwork unveiled at Caboolture Hospital

Aboriginal artwork by Aboriginal artist Elaine Chambers-Hegarty, telling a unique story for Caboolture Hospital, was installed at the hospital's new main entry to close out NAIDOC week celebrations in November 2020.



(L-R) Erin, Rachel and Elwyn with the new artwork installation

The new entry was unveiled on Friday 13 November 2020 and has helped to create a stronger sense of inclusion for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people visiting the hospital.

Chair of the Caboolture Hospital Reconciliation Action Plan Committee, Rachel Bailey, said the artwork helps to demonstrate cultural recognition and improves the way Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people experience the hospital.

“The artwork has created a sense of community and importantly provides a culturally inclusive and safe space,” Rachel said.

The artwork also features the local Gubbi Gubbi welcome message ‘Wunya Ngulum’ which translates to ‘Welcome Everyone’.

Caboolture Hospital Cultural Capability Officer, Elwyn Henaway, said the inclusion of traditional language in the artwork is an important acknowledgment of the Traditional Owners.

“Wunya Ngulum lets Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community know they are all welcome and that our hospital is a safe place for them to be,” Elwyn said.

The intricate artwork is rich with colour and represents the lands around Caboolture, including the Glasshouse Mountains, Bunya Trees and the Carpet Snake (“Kabul”), which gives its name to Caboolture.

Caboolture Hospital is undergoing a major expansion and redevelopment to build a bigger and better hospital with more health services. The Aboriginal artwork will feature strongly in the new Clinical Services Building and the new Multi-Storey Carpark.

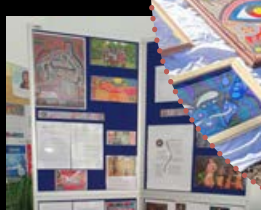
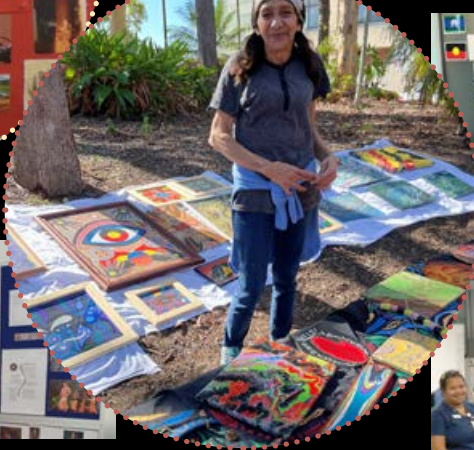
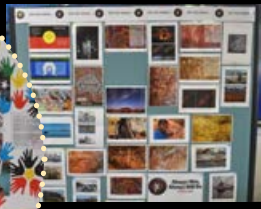
Always was, always will be: NAIDOC Celebrations across Metro North

Last year, Metro North Hospital and Health Service turned our large community NAIDOC celebration virtual using our Better Together Health Van Facebook page. We celebrated with a diverse and exciting schedule of films including traditional dancing, children's activities, song, health and wellbeing, cultural knowledge sharing, International Year of the Nurse and the Midwife celebrations, and yarning with Torres Strait Islander Elders.

Staff and services across Metro North also celebrated NAIDOC week 2020 and the theme 'Always was, Always will be' by acknowledging the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have occupied and cared for this continent for over 65,000 years. The celebrations included morning-teas, display competitions, cultural workshops and lots more.

We share some of these celebrations with you in our photo collage.





Better Together Van 2020 Engagements

The Better Together Health Van was announced on Close the Gap Day in March 2020 to deliver health promotion and education, clinical service delivery and engagement activities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living on the North Side of Brisbane. Although the van happened to launch at the same time as the declaration of the COVID-19 pandemic, we seized every opportunity for the van to facilitate community engagement activities and support our COVID-19 public health response in community.

We celebrate the van's activities during 2020 with this photo collage. As we head in to 2021, we look forward to continuing our support in community through the Better Together Health Van.





STAY STRONGER

LIVE LONGER

**DO YOUR BOWEL
SCREEN TEST TODAY**

GET IT

People aged 50 to 74 will receive a kit in the mail.

DO IT

The test is free and will take just a few minutes at different times. So don't put it off until later – get it done.

POST IT

Return the kit in the mail using the envelope provided. You don't need stamps or to pay for postage.

DONE

The results will be sent to you and your doctor within two weeks.

Getting to know Deadly Start trainees 2020

We recently caught up with five of Metro North's Deadly Start trainees to talk about their experience within the program so far. The new trainees commenced in July 2020 and are inching closer towards completing their chosen qualification.

Here's what they have to say:



Aaliyah Dickson

I am currently completing a Certificate III in Health Services Assistances as a trainee Assistant in Nursing (AIN) on the Renal and General Medicine ward at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

When I start my shift each week, I help tidy up in the ward and help patients with their meals throughout the day. I assist with restocking of shelves and supplies, and support AINs, Enrolled Nurses and Registered Nurses as needed.

What I like most about what I do is bringing a smile to many patient's faces. Seeing them recover and return home to their loved ones is the greatest feeling ever.

When I finish school next year, I'd love to study Nursing abroad in the United Kingdom. I would also like to study clinical psychology as I am passionate about helping patients in all factors of their health.

I joined this program as it is an amazing opportunity as a teenager with aspirations to have a career in the health industry. It's preparing me for my future and helping me decide what path I would like to take.



Alice Morton

I am completing a Certificate III in Health Services Assistance traineeship as an Assistant in Nursing, based on the General Surgery ward at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

I have always been interested in the health industry and I chose to pursue nursing because it's so organised and always busy. I'm really enjoying my traineeship and I enjoy learning new things each week.

Since being a part of Deadly Start, my communication skills have improved and I have gained more confidence in myself. The staff on my ward are very helpful and they make me feel very welcomed and comfortable.

I really enjoy getting to know my patients and caring for them. Caring for people and helping others comes naturally to me.

When I graduate high school, I would like to study the Diploma of Nursing at TAFE, whilst working as an Assistant in Nursing part-time.



Cody Burns

I am currently completing a Certificate III in Health Services Assistance as a trainee Patient Support Officer (PSO), based at the Caboolture Hospital.

My experience so far in the Deadly Start program has been really positive and very rewarding. I joined the program as I wanted to learn more about the health industry and determine whether it was a pathway I wanted to pursue after I graduate high school.

The best thing about being a PSO within Metro North is being able to help people and improve their patient journey.

I hope to learn as much as I can throughout the remainder of my traineeship and continue working as a PSO after I graduate high school.

IN FOCUS

Deadly Start EDUCATION 2 EMPLOYMENT (E2E)



Kelise Beetson

I am currently completing a Certificate III in Health Services Assistance as a trainee Assistant in Nursing, based at the Caboolture Hospital in the Day Procedure Unit.

I was born in Queensland and my mob are the Worimi people. Outside of school and work I like to paint, draw, create sculptures and play video games.

Being a part of the Deadly Start program has helped me grow in confidence and broaden my skills.

The staff within my ward make me feel welcomed and appreciated and always take the time to answer any questions I have.

My traineeship is always busy and very interesting. Each Tuesday I help with admissions, recovery and patient discharge.

During the afternoons I will usually spend time in the colonoscopy and endoscopy theatres which I really enjoy.

Since being a part of the Deadly Start program, it has helped me decide what career pathway I will take.

After I graduate high school, I intend to continue my studies in nursing as I know this is a career that I will still enjoy in 10 years' time and beyond.



Kyeshia Paton

My mob are Gomerioi and Mununjali. I am completing my Certificate III in Health Services Assistance traineeship on the Stroke and Neurology ward. Since I was little, I have always wanted to be a nurse. I heard about the Deadly Start program at a career day event last year and knew I wanted to be involved.

The patients I support each week are mostly elderly patients. I have had many great interactions with the patients on my ward and I enjoy providing them with some company when they may not have many visitors.

I have grown in confidence since I have started my Deadly Start traineeship. I use my initiative and seek out additional tasks when I have completed my work. The staff on my ward are the nicest people I have ever met. They make me feel valued and appreciated each week.

I would like to continue working as an Assistant in Nursing after my traineeship and potentially further my studies at university.

Better Together Medication Access helping to Close the Gap

Redcliffe Hospital staff excited to roll out Better Together Medication Access to patients

Metro North Hospital and Health Service Better Together Medication Access was launched on 1 October 2020 and provides prescribed discharge medications at no cost to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients.

This program was developed to support Metro North's commitment to improving the health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people under the *Better Together Health Plan 2019 – 2022* including clinical priority areas Reducing the Burden of Disease and Living Well and Living Longer.

The health status of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is significantly poorer than non-Indigenous Australians. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have poorer self-assessed health, a higher occurrence of long-term health conditions and an increased burden of disease, when compared to the non-Indigenous population.

There was an eight-year gap in life expectancy between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Metro North Hospital and Health Service region and the total Queensland population in 2011. Cardiovascular disease contributed 1.8 years to the gap and diabetes 1.7 years. Mental disorders, cardiovascular disease and diabetes were the largest contributor to the gap in disease and injury burden between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and non-Indigenous residents of Metro North region.

By enhancing access to medication upon discharge from Metro North facilities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the Better Together Medication Access will assist in reducing burden of disease, enhance continuity of care and improve the likelihood of successfully transitioning between healthcare settings.

Staff at Metro North are excited to support the Closing the Gap agenda with Better Together Medication Access. Jodi works in the Ngarrama Maternity Services at Redcliffe Hospital and was thrilled to learn about the new program and what it means for her Mums and bubs.

"I know that accessing scripts in community can be hard and time consuming, so this is going to make health care not only more affordable but show that we are here to support and make a difference in Closing the Gap. I have seen a few Ngarrama mothers access the program and they loved it. It meant they could collect medication upon discharge from the hospital at no cost and go straight home with their new little baby," Jodi said.

If you or your family have accessed this program and would like to share your story or experience with us, please email Bettersogetherhealthvan@health.qld.gov.au. We would love to hear from you.

For more information on Better Together Medication Access and our Better Together Health Plan please visit <https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/better-together-van/>.

Feedback from patients so far....

"This helps me actually take my medicines"

"Medicine costs have been a problem for me in the past"

"I'm actually going to get my medicines on discharge"

"I now don't need to go back to my GP straight after hospital"

"Takes the financial pressure off me at discharge"



(L-R) Ngarrama Indigenous Health Worker, Jodi and Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer, Brianna





Nurse Suzy Warren is proud to identify

Earlier this year we caught up with Suzy Warren from The Prince Charles Hospital to discuss why she thinks it is important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to identify when accessing Metro North Hospital and Health Services.

Suzy is a proud Mitakoodi woman from Cloncurry on her mother's side and is currently working as a nurse at The Prince Charles Hospital.

"My mother is Aboriginal and being Aboriginal is such a big part of me, part of my identity," Suzy shared.

Acknowledging that she is Aboriginal means that it is acknowledging her family, all that they have been through and their history.

"We should be proud because we have previously been taught to be ashamed of our ancestry and I think it is important in this day and age to make a change," Suzy said.

As a nurse, if Suzy is aware that a patient has identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander she will have a chat with them to see how they are feeling, find out where they are from and about their family. Sharing that she identifies as Aboriginal often helps patients to feel a bit more comfortable and takes away some of the stress of being at hospital.

"Sometimes we just need a distraction from everything that is going on. It is also important that our patients feel comfortable to have someone to talk to if they have any issues or concerns. Our people can be really shy, including me, so it's important they feel comfortable talking to someone," Suzy said.

With historical impacts and inter-generational trauma, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers can feel unsafe, distrust and shame when identifying their heritage due to stigma and fear of the health system. The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team is trying to break this barrier and support community to feel safe and proud to identify when accessing MNHHS facilities and services.

To ensure Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people receive appropriate services, cultural support and care the right way, health staff must ask the question 'Are you of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander origin?'. By identifying you will have access to support services, increased health checks and improved long-term health outcomes.



Better Together Medication Access

Are you of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Origin?

Better Together Medication Access will cover all out of pocket expenses for prescribed discharge medication for all self-Identifying Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people discharging from a Metro North Hospital and Health Service.

Better Together Medication Access is only available through Metro North Hospital and Health Service Pharmacy Services.

How it works



You will be asked ‘Are you of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Origin?’. Health Service staff must ask you the question, we cannot assume upon appearance.



If you identify, regardless of age, you will be eligible for Better Together Medication Access.



Better Together Medication Access is Metro North Hospital and Health Service wide and will be available from 1 October 2020.



Talk to Staff caring for you for more information.

By identifying you will receive support from culturally appropriate services including our Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officers to assist your healthcare journey and recovery back to community.

For further information, contact your local Metro North Hospital and Health Service Pharmacy Team.

IN THE NEWS

Australian of the Year Awards 2021 highlights First Nations excellence

The 2021 Australian of the Year Awards have been announced and there are plenty of deadly Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander winners.

» <https://bit.ly/367xVAL>

An Aboriginal-led approach saved communities from COVID-19. Now it's time to tackle mental health

Indigenous-run health organisations can use their successful approach to coronavirus safety to transform the mental health system.

» <https://bit.ly/39Bm7rT>

Ngaree Blow emerges as an Indigenous champion who can help right the wrongs of inequality

When she was growing up, Ngaree Blow used to read statistics about the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and wonder, “does that mean I’m going to die early?”

The figures showed Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people had, on average, a significantly lower life expectancy than the rest of the population.

» <https://ab.co/37nmXpq>

Recognising Excellence: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker and Practitioner Awards

Three outstanding Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health practitioners have been recognised this morning at an awards ceremony at Parliament House for excellence in their fields.

<https://bit.ly/37tRH0P>

Aboriginal health service Maari Ma reports mixed results for children, young people in far-west NSW

A new report looking at a number of health, educational, and social indicators for Indigenous children and young people in far-west New South Wales has shown improvements in some areas but a decline in others.

Aboriginal health service Maari Ma released its latest Health, Development, and Wellbeing in Far Western NSW – Our Children and Youth report last week.

» <https://ab.co/2l5upZ>

Enhancing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural learning

University of Queensland staff will have greater access to training on a detailed exploration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, cultures and contemporary issues, thanks to an innovative online education foundation course.

Around 17,000 staff at all levels will complete units of Core Cultural Learning to strengthen the University’s cultural capability

» <https://bit.ly/33FWvXb>

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health: Room for improvement

A new report card details how health indicators are performing – with mental health and incarceration rates of key concern.

The Productivity Commission has released the most comprehensive overview on the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the Overcoming Indigenous Disadvantage 2020 report.

» <https://bit.ly/33A9sl9>

When it came to COVID-19, Indigenous Australians sent it packing

When Indigenous leader Pat Turner heard of the spread of COVID-19 in China in January, she feared for the lives of those with chronic illnesses and vulnerable Elders, revered as living historians.

But a rapid response by Aboriginal leaders to stop the virus worked. Of the 907 deaths and 27,698 cases in Australia, including 685 deaths in aged care, there have only been 149 cases among Indigenous Australians. There were no cases in remote communities and not one death of any Indigenous person. Only 13 Indigenous people were hospitalised.

» <https://bit.ly/36yrtSY>

STAFF PROFILE

A day in the life of Brooke Muir: Indigenous Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) Workforce Development Coordinator, Biala Community Health Centre



1. Can you tell us a bit about yourself, who your family are and where you are from?

Yiradhu marang (hello), I'm a fair skinned Wiradjuri woman from Central West NSW, with a passion for relationship building and deep listening. I'm usually submerged in water, seeking storytellers, barefoot in nature and unearthing racism.

2. You are working as an Indigenous AOD Workforce Development Coordinator at Biala City Community Health Centre. Can you tell us what your role involves?

I design and deliver culturally secure AOD education and training programs, offer culturally secure advice, professional support and other workforce development activities for both Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander, and non-Indigenous health and community service workers across Queensland.

3. What are some of the health barriers you see in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities?

- Shame and Stigma in AOD
- Health equity
- Transgenerational trauma
- Grief and loss

4. What are some of the things that Metro North HHS are doing to address these barriers?

Implementing the Better Together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2019 - 2022, establishing the Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership in Mental Health, Alcohol and Other Drugs group to provide leadership and expert advice relating to the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and contribute to decision making in the development of culturally secure competent MHAOD services have helped immensely in breaking down these barriers. The accurate identification of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers, the Better Together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultural practice program, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander role creations and the Better Together Health Van are also positively addressing these barriers.

5. Before commencing at Biala City Community Health Centre, where did you work and what was your role?

Prior to my current role, I worked at Lives Lived Well as an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander AOD Counsellor and Case Manager in the Clinical Liaison Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Service (CLAIS).

6. You are working on a Queensland Health initiative, Insight, delivered by Metro North Mental Health – Alcohol and Drug Service. Can you tell us about Insight and your involvement?

Insight are specialist providers of alcohol and other drug training, education, information and practice advice for the AOD workforce. My involvement is to deliver training and cultural capacity building activities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Indigenous practitioners.

7. What has been your career highlight?

Engaging and building relationships with multiple Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, all ages across Queensland and supporting them to empower and reconnect to their solutions for wellness and better health.

8. What or who inspired you to pursue a career in Indigenous health?

The young people and families I worked with in out of home care. They inspire me to live courageously, with a strong back and soft front. Their resilience to overcome adversity, whilst experiencing multiple health issues inspired me to seek change, cultivate safe environments and advocate solutions that focus on wellness and health.

9. How do you recharge throughout the year to maintain your mental health?

Daily movement, walking, swimming in the ocean, spoken word poetry and surrounding myself with my loved ones.

WORD OF THE MONTH

“Gambal (Gun-bull)”
is rain in Dyirbal
language

The Dyirbal language is spoken in North Queensland along the Tully River and Johnston River catchments. There are several dialects or related languages across the language Nation including Ngadjan, Waribarra Mamu, Dulgubarra Mamu, Jirrbal, Gulngay, Djirru, Girramay and Walmalbarra.

Join our Deadly Indigenous Cadetship Program

Metro North Hospital and Health Service, is committed to Closing the Gap through recruitment, workforce and development opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.



Metro North is offering Allied Health, Nursing and Midwifery Indigenous Cadetships in 2021.

A Cadet performs a range of clinical support activities and on the job skills development, while completing their full-time tertiary studies for a Health Practitioner, Nursing, or Midwifery qualification in Australia. Cadets work under the delegation and supervision of a Health Professional in their field to provide effective patient care.

Under s105 of the *Anti-Discrimination Act 1991*, as an equal opportunity measure, a candidate must be Indigenous to the Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander Community to be eligible for a Cadetship under this program.

2021 Cadetship Details

Cadetships are available across all Metro North facilities including, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, The Prince Charles Hospital, STARS (Surgical, Treatment and Rehabilitation Service), Caboolture Hospital, Redcliffe Hospital, Community and Oral Health and Mental Health Services.

Cadetship positions are being offered in Physiotherapy, Social Work, Speech Pathology, Occupational Therapy, Pharmacy, Oral Health, Nutrition and Dietetics, Nursing and Midwifery.

Cadets are employed as temporary part time employees, and gain experience over 60 days of work placement, (which is equivalent to 12 weeks full time work). These hours are scheduled to fit around each Cadet's full-time study commitments during the calendar year.

Cadets are employed by Queensland Health and receive a salary for the 60 days (or 12 weeks equivalent) of placement work. Health Practitioners receive \$26.30 - \$31.11 per hour, and Nursing and Midwifery students receive \$29.08 - \$33.40 per hour, dependent on prior experience and qualifications. Cadets also receive an allowance of \$13,000 through our Government Partner AFL SportsReady.

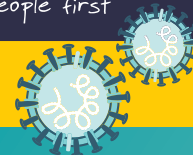
Contacts

For queries about the positions: Emma Driver, Indigenous Cadetship Coordinator, Metro North Hospital and Health Service: 3647 9699 or AHWorkforce@health.qld.gov.au

Search 'Indigenous Cadetship' on smartjobs.qld.gov.au – Applications Close 29th January 2021

This initiative is supported by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team, Metro North Hospital and Health Service

COVID-19 (Coronavirus)



Factsheet – Protect yourself and your mob!

What is it?

COVID-19 is a new virus and belongs to the same family of illnesses as the common cold. When this illness starts, it may develop in the lungs and start to affect them. In some cases, people may not feel sick at all while others may become very ill, very quickly.

What are the symptoms?

COVID-19 is a respiratory illness that affects your nose, throat and lungs. This will affect parts of your body that affect your breathing; If you are sick with COVID-19, your symptoms might include; feeling hot all the time, coughing, a sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose, feeling really tired, diarrhoea, vomiting or nausea, loss of smell and/or taste.

How does it spread?

COVID-19 is spread between people, usually when a sick person coughs or sneezes. You can also catch it if they have coughed or sneezed onto a surface (like a door handle) that you touch, which can be transferred by your hands into your mouth, nose and eyes when you touch your face or eat.

How can I protect myself, my family and my community?

Washing your hands often and properly means that you can prevent the virus entering your body. This means washing your hands for at least 20-30 seconds.

Try to keep a safe distance from people who are coughing or sneezing and avoid hand contact (shaking hands and hugging) to protect yourself.

It is also important to look after yourself and keep your body strong as your best defence. Eat well, exercise and make sure you are getting enough sleep. Ensure you and your family are up to date with your immunisations including the flu vaccine.

Who is more at risk?

Because the COVID-19 virus is new, everyone is at risk of catching it. People suffering from poorer health or the older population are likely to become seriously unwell as their bodies will struggle to fight the virus.

What do I do if I am feeling sick?

If you are experiencing symptoms of the COVID-19 virus such as high fever, a cough, sore throat or shortness of breath it is important to seek medical advice by either your local doctor, Aboriginal Medical Service or local hospital.

When making an appointment with your doctor it is important to let them know what your symptoms are so that they can protect the broader community and ensure the best care for you before you come in.

It's important to think of those around you if you are unwell and ensure you cover your mouth (or wear a mask), avoid close contact and stay at home if you are sick.

To find the nearest clinic to you, please call **13HEALTH** for up to date information **13 43 25 84** or for further information about COVID-19 visit: Queensland Health <https://www.health.qld.gov.au/>
Australian Government Department of Health <https://www.health.gov.au/>

6 steps to successful everyday hand washing using soap



Rub hands palm to palm.



Rub hands palm to palm with fingers interlaced.



In a circular motion rub the tips of fingers in the palm of the opposite hand.



Clean thumb by holding it in the other hand and rotating.



Clean wrist thoroughly also.



Rinse hands with water.

COVID-19 (Coronavirus) – Protect yourself and your mob!!

Wash hands often

Wash your hands often and properly, after being out and about, before eating and after going to the toilet. The virus can be spread by your hands into your mouth, nose and eyes when you touch your face or eat food.



Avoid close contact

Keep a safe distance from people who are coughing and sneezing and avoid hand contact such as shaking hands.



Look after yourself

Looking after yourself by eating a healthy, balanced diet, getting regular physical activity, sleeping well and reducing stress is your best protection to avoid getting sick.

Call your doctor

If you're unwell with any of the symptoms – seek medical advice from your doctor, Aboriginal Medical Service or your local hospital. Let them know your symptoms before presenting so they know you're coming.

Call **13HEALTH** for advice **13 43 25 84**

What are the symptoms?



You feel hot all the time



Cough



Sore throat



Feeling really tired



Runny nose



Shortness of breath



Loss of smell



Loss of taste



Diarrhoea



Vomiting or nausea

This initiative is supported by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Leadership Team, Metro North Hospital and Health Service

#19 A&TSI PATIENT ADVICE FLYER | V4 Effective: 18/11/2020



Metro North Hospital and Health Service *Putting people first*

Better Together Health Van

The Better Together Health Van is a free community service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living on the North Side of Brisbane (from Brisbane River to Kilcoy), providing access to:

- Health promotion and education
- Opportunistic health screening
- An avenue to yarn with a health care provider to provide feedback on hospital experience and healthcare journey
- Opportunity to co-design healthcare services for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
- Access to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers and supporting health staff.



How to access the van?

Visit our website to learn more metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/better-together-van

Follow our Facebook Page @BetterTogetherHealthVan for information on locations, upcoming events, important health information and community stories.



Making a booking

If you would like to request the Van visits your community or event, contact the Metro North Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team to make a booking on (07) 3139 3235 or email Bettersogetherhealthvan@health.qld.gov.au

The service is owned and operated by Metro North Hospital and Health Service. The Better Together Health Van will be utilised as an extension of MNHHS in creating engagement activities and developing partnerships and relationships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers, families and community organisations.

Over the next 12 months (March 2020 – March 2021) the Van will be gathering community feedback, assessing service demand and evaluating clinical service needs.

We welcome your feedback, contributions, story ideas and details on any upcoming events.

Please contact the Manager, Communications at the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team on A_TSIHU_MNHHS@health.qld.gov.au or phone (07) 3139 3235.



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