

Metro North Health

Message from the **Director of Nursing, COH and Manager, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health, COH**

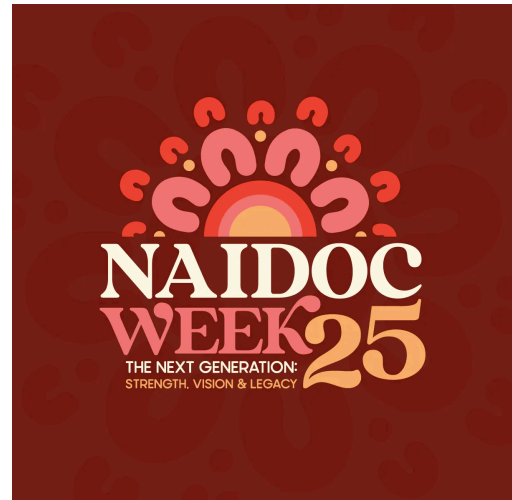
Tanya Beaumont | Paul Drahm



NAIDOC Week is held every year from the first Sunday in July until the following Sunday.

This year it is held from Sunday, July 5 to July 15 with multiple events occurring across Australia and locally here in South East Queensland. NAIDOC Week celebrates and recognises the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. NAIDOC Week is an opportunity for all Australians to learn about First Nations cultures and histories and participate in celebrations of the oldest, continuous living culture on earth.

The origin of NAIDOC (National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee), can be traced to the emergence of Aboriginal groups in the 1920's which sought to increase awareness in the wider community of the status and treatment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians.



This year's theme is **“The Next Generation: Strength, Vision and Legacy”** emphasizing the contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young peoples and celebrates their role in shaping a positive future for their communities. It also acknowledges the wisdom of Elders and the importance of passing down cultural knowledge and traditions.

We are proud to have the longest and most sustained Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Yarning Circle, held monthly at the Wellness Hub, within Metro North Health that includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elders from our community. Any staff member is welcomed to attend to engage and meet our Elders. Through the Yarning Circle we have facilitated an ongoing relationship with our Elders directly with Early Childhood Centres (Sesame Lane and Canopy early Education) to provide cultural sharing, story telling and activities with children. We are also planning a health engagement activity to be held later in the year with a local high school that has a high population of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students.

Community and Oral Health will acknowledge NAIDOC Week 2025 with a series of **Cultural Yarns** to be held across our facilities from Tuesday 15th July. It is a unique opportunity for any Community and Oral Health staff to connect and chat with our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce colleagues and community, in a safe, friendly environment, to yarn about self-held or society-held beliefs and opinions including stereotypes about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, sharing culture and enhancing engagement.

We have recently received feedback from Reconciliation Australia on our Draft Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) and will be eagerly working through this with the aim to launch our Second Innovate RAP later in the year.

Our commitment to acknowledging and celebrating cultural events and gathering throughout the year, including NAIDOC Week, will be critical in the work we will do.

If you have any queries or would like to contribute to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health agenda with Community and Oral Health, please do not hesitate to contact either Tanya or myself or forward an email to COH-RAP: coh-rap@health.qld.gov.au

Kind Regards

Paul Drahm and Tanya Beaumont
Co-Chairs, Community and Oral Health Reconciliation Action Plan Working Group