

Talk-About

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

August/September 2020

Metro North Hospital and Health Service *Putting people first*

Better Together Funding Initiatives designed to improve health outcomes

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Leadership Team (A&TSILT) has awarded eight successful applicants Better Together Grants designed to improve health outcomes and service enhancement across the Hospital and Health Service (HHS) for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers.

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Queensland
Government



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, Chermide Community Health Centre, 490 Hamilton Road, Chermide 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 306v

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

After Hours Ph: 5316 5481

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

Professional Lead Ph: 3646 2695

Ngarrama Maternity Services

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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Funding to the value of \$25,000 each was awarded to the following projects:

The Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, Maternity Allied Health Service

The project aims to find a better way to deliver allied health services (physiotherapy, nutrition, dietetics and social work) before and after pregnancy for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women birthing at the Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

Metro North Hospital and Health Service, Program of Experience in Palliative Approach

Bedsheets and bed runners will be supplied to various mortuaries and palliative care wards across Metro North facilities to provide a subtle compassionate gesture and cultural respect for the deceased and family.

Mental Health, Aboriginal Mental Health First Aid

The project will provide Indigenous mental health workers with accreditation to provide Aboriginal mental health First Aid training, which is a course designed to provide skills and knowledge to assist their fellow co-workers when they are providing treatment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experiencing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis.

The Prince Charles Hospital, Emergency Department Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer

The project will see the introduction of a seven-day Indigenous Hospital Liaison service to The Prince Charles Hospital adult and paediatric emergency departments (ED). The newly created position will provide an Indigenous workforce presence that is culturally safe, visible and enhances access to culturally appropriate support. The dedicated role will be an opportunity for a collaborative approach between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and clinical streams in the emergency departments.

Redcliffe Hospital, Get Set for Prep Program

The project delivers a prep readiness program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander kindergarten aged children and will be run by an Allied Health Assistant offering seven sessions during the school term. The sessions will target language, literacy and fine motor skills, as well as healthy lunch boxes and eating habits.

Caboolture Hospital, Emergency Department Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer

The project involves a dedicated Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer located within the Caboolture Hospital Emergency Department, Monday to Friday.

The aim is to improve the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patient journey through the Emergency Department, to collect data in service shortfalls and provide feedback to better understand the needs to improve health delivery and compliance with care plans.

Community and Oral Health, Deadly Smiles Project

The Deadly Smiles Project is a pilot oral health promotion and early screening initiative targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-17 and their families in the Moreton Bay Region.

The project will provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with a monthly oral health screening and a fluoride varnishing program in a culturally appropriate setting such as early childhood centres, schools, neighbourhood centres or community health clinics and the setting will establish a dental home for these consumers and their families.

Community and Oral Health, SaFE Child Protection Training

The project is to develop a module that integrates a culturally sensitive framework within the current online Metro North child protection training package. The module will educate clinical and non-clinical staff on how to better respond to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families that might be experiencing difficulties with child protection issues.

Director of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team Sherry Holzapfel congratulated the successful applicants at a morning tea held in late July.

"The calibre of applications we received across the HHS was outstanding and I would like to thank everyone who took the time to put forward a submission," Sherry said.

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"The successful projects align to our Better Together health plan to ensure the delivery of culturally safe and culturally appropriate health care service delivery across the HHS."

.....

"We look forward to supporting these projects over the next two years and assessing how they are providing real outcomes for our staff, broader workforce and patients."

Read more about the projects on page 15.

A word from the Director



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

I would like to acknowledge our colleagues during this time with Queensland continuing to work incredibly hard to protect its residents through the COVID-19 pandemic.

Queensland continues to see low numbers of transmission across the community – this is a huge achievement and a tribute to the commitment and vigilance of the community.

For our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, I would like to recognise your strength and dedication to keeping mob safe. You have maintained excellent hand hygiene, social distancing and looking after yourself to keep our Elders and vulnerable community members safe.

It's important to not lose vigilance over the next few months. We all can play a part by being clear with our mob that if you are sick, stay home. If you have symptoms, get tested, ensure you stay home until a negative test result has been returned until your symptoms resolve and adhere to medical advice.




I encourage you to continue to follow the advice of our Chief Health Officer Dr Jeannette Young PSM – “*Getting tested and abiding by our restrictions means you are not only protecting yourself and your loved ones, but also helping Queensland to get back to the lifestyle we love. Getting tested for COVID-19 is the equivalent of donating blood: it’s for the common good. In our current circumstances, your COVID-19 test could very literally save someone else’s life.*”

Metro North Hospital and Health Service is continuing our local First Nations COVID-19 response through the enhancement of workforce to deliver patient care and preventative support to our patients, developing and delivering tailored communications, the development of a peer responder program for our staff responding to the pandemic, enhanced pandemic testing plan and in-home critical antenatal support via telehealth.

On a positive note, I was pleased we were able to still celebrate NAIDOC Week through a virtual celebration and the feedback from community members has been fantastic. The videos will remain up on our [website](https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/better-together-van/2020-naidoc-virtual-event) for this year (<https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/better-together-van/2020-naidoc-virtual-event>) and I encourage you to take the time to watch them with your family and friends. Some of our staff have organised ‘watch parties’ for patients and this is a great idea to enjoy learning about the culture, history and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

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



I'm at risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19. If you have a cough, fever, sore throat or shortness of breath get tested."

- Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a type of virus that can cause sickness ranging from the common cold to more severe illnesses affecting the lungs.
- It can spread from person to person usually from an infected person who coughs or sneezes near others. It can also spread by hands and surfaces, including taps, tables and mobile phones.
- Anyone can be affected by COVID-19, but people with a weaker immune system and chronic health conditions are more likely to get seriously ill. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people with chronic health conditions (such as asthma, diabetes and heart disease) are at higher risk, particularly Elders.

Metro North Hospital and Health Service is conducting COVID-19 screening at fever clinics and community assessment clinics at a range of locations. To find the latest testing centre information, visit the Queensland Health website at <https://bit.ly/3319PLu>

Keep updated by following the Metro North Hospital and Health Service Better Together Health Van Facebook Page [@BetterTogetherHealthVan](#) [#keepmobsafe](#) [#keeppamlesafe](#) [#bettertogether](#)

Metro North Virtual NAIDOC Event 2020

This year the Metro North Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team (A&TSILT) took our annual NAIDOC event virtual.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic the annual Metro North Caboolture NAIDOC Family Fun Day event planned for Tuesday 7 July 2020 had to be cancelled.

The Metro North Caboolture NAIDOC Family Fun Day has been held at St Columban's College for the past 3 years bringing community together to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history, culture and achievements and is an opportunity to recognise the contributions that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people make to our country and our society.

Each year, the Caboolture NAIDOC Family Fun Day event continues to grow with over 1,500 people attending in 2019 consisting of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and friends and 64 health / government / community stallholders taking part. This event includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander dancing, free children's activities, free community BBQ, guest speakers and stallholders.

During the COVID-19 pandemic a lot of small businesses and community social events were impacted and cancelled. Proceeding with our Metro North Virtual NAIDOC event celebration allowed us to partner with local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander businesses to support our community and grow our relationships as well as continuing the annual celebrations of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture and history.

To continue sharing NAIDOC celebrations with staff and community the Metro North A&TSILT created a virtual NAIDOC celebration using our Better Together Health Van Facebook page and website.

This year's NAIDOC theme "Always was, always will be" recognised that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people have occupied and cared for this continent for over 65,000 years. Metro North celebrated this year's theme 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.

There has been great feedback from staff and consumers who enjoyed viewing our range of NAIDOC videos: "I believe that each HHS should mimic what Metro North provides. In my opinion Metro North HHS is the lead in promoting education, conversation, activities, community events for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and HHS staff through social media. I'm so impressed!"

If you haven't viewed our Metro North Virtual NAIDOC videos you can access them at: <https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/better-together-van>

Facebook: www.facebook.com/BetterTogetherHealthVan





L-R: Senior Project Officer Neressa Johnston, Torres Strait Islander Elder Aunty Rose Fauid



Performer Likiki Millet pictured singing in our virtual NAIDOC film

The Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital NAIDOC

The Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital celebrated NAIDOC week with activities running from Monday 6 July – Friday 10 July. The activities included a flag raising ceremony joined by Metro North Hospital and Health Service Board members, cultural performances and workshops, lighting show in the main atrium displaying artwork symbols, artwork displays and lot's more.

On Friday 10 July, radio station 98.9FM joined in the celebrations and activities including interviews with various Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff to acknowledge Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture, the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife and this year's NAIDOC theme "Always was, always will be".

The event was well received by staff, patients, family and visitors.

"The highlights of the week for me were the basket weaving display and how staff and visitors enjoyed the entertainment especially the "Huntsmen Band", who had everyone either dancing as they made their way to the lifts or asking for a requested song. Staff at the admissions and concierge desk enjoyed the variety of music," said Patricia Kennedy, Team Leader Indigenous Hospital Service.

Executive Director of Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, David Rosengren and hospital staff, enjoyed the musical talents of local Aboriginal band 'The Huntsmen' so much that since the NAIDOC celebrations ended the band have been performing once a week at the hospital for patients, visitors and staff in the main atrium.



L-R: Metro North Board Member Adrian Carson, Clinical Nurse Kiris Reis, RBWH Executive Director David Rosengren, Metro North Board Member Bonnie Barry and Cultural Capability Officer Geoff Binge



Director A&TSILT Sherry Holzapfel with 98.9FM radio hosts



The Huntsmen performing at RBWH NAIDOC event

Assistant Minister for Health visits Better Together Health Van

Hon. Nikki Boyd, Assistant Minister for Health and State Member for Pine Rivers, visited the Better Together Health Van on 5 August 2020 as part of a tour of services at The Prince Charles Hospital and Chermiside Community Health Centre.

The Better Together Health Van, launched on National Close the Gap Day in March 2020, provides outreach education, health promotion and opportunistic health screening services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people living on the northside of Brisbane.

The van has tele-health capabilities in addition to a clinical space, screening equipment and a dedicated senior project officer to engage and partner with community and consumers to provide opportunities for service improvements and co-design.

The initiative is responsive to community needs based upon feedback gathered as part of the Better Together Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Plan 2019-2022.



L-R: Senior Project Officer Neressa Johnston, Hon. Nikki Boyd, Assistant Minister for Health and State Member for Pine Rivers, Senior Project Officer William Bern and Service Development Manager Kelly Smith."

Creating healthy habits in the workplace

Community and Oral Health team members Horace Nona and Vaughan Travers have established a Staff Wellbeing Garden at Brighton Health Campus.

The idea of the garden was to create something sustainable within the workplace and for everyone to enjoy the benefits of fresh food. The garden includes rocket and lettuce with more to follow.

Staff are encouraged to grab a watering can and replenish the garden for a little time out.



L-R: Vaughan and Horace pictured when they planted the seedlings.



Community and Oral Health Executive Director, Tami Photinos harvesting lettuce and kale.



Yarning Circle members take pride in new banner

Community and Oral Health Yarning Circle members were thrilled to receive a banner from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team as formal recognition of their group.

The banner features artwork by Elaine Chambers-Hegarty, with the words:

The yarning circle is your opportunity to share your personal experience of community health care, what community health care means to you and how this can look in the future.

Your participation in the Yarning Circle is voluntary and your voice is valued.

The group meets each month at the Brighton Wellness Hub. The hub has established some great partnerships with local community organisations, aged care groups, health organisations and local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander groups and Elders.

“We regularly welcome local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to the Brighton Wellness Hub for the Metro North Community Health Yarning Circle,” said Tami Photinos, Executive Director of Community and Oral Health.

“This is providing an invaluable opportunity for local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to share their experience of community health and share their thoughts about how it should look in the future.”



Beanies are a welcome donation for patients

Local Elder, Uncle Jim Douglas, recently visited the Indigenous Hospital Liaison service at The Prince Charles Hospital Service for cultural support and a yarn.

Jim said the service is important for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to access to receive cultural support and advocacy throughout hospital visits and admissions, also stating it's very important to emotional and social wellbeing.

While on his visit, Jim received a bag, water bottle, and a t-shirt from the service and a beanie which was kindly donated to the IHLO service for patients during the winter months.

Ngarrama resources provide much needed support to families

Ngarrama maternity services across the health service are receiving praise from new mums and families accessing the services, with extra patient supports put in place during COVID-19.

Breast pumps and baby bags including all the essentials for newborns have been provided to Ngarrama maternity clients, as well as transport support.

Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital Midwifery Group Practice Manager Nicole Moller said the resources have helped women struggling to get all the equipment and needs for their babies.

"We have had a few women lately that have benefited from the extra baby goods in the baby bags. All the women that have received one so far have been extremely grateful," Nicole said.

"With the help of the taxi vouchers we were able to facilitate a mother and her baby getting home safely following discharge from the special care nursery.

"Without the taxi voucher this mum would have had to take her small baby and bags onto public transport during late afternoon peak hour which is definitely not ideal, especially in this current climate with COVID-19."



Baby Frankie Violet is enjoying her Ngarrama onesie. Mum Denielle snapped this cute picture and is proud to have birthed three children through the Ngarrama maternity program at Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital.

Ngarrama is a free antenatal and birthing service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families who choose to birth at The Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, Caboolture, Kilcoy and Redcliffe Hospitals. Any woman who is Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander or any woman whose baby is Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander can use the service.

Contact

Ngarrama Caboolture

Indigenous Health Worker: 0439 732 970
Pregnancy issues call Birth Suite: 5433 8888
Caboolture Hospital: McKean St, Caboolture
Community Clinic: 12 King St, Caboolture

Ngarrama Redcliffe

Maternity ward: 3883 7709
Indigenous Health Worker: 0407251890
Redcliffe Hospital: Anzac Ave, Redcliffe

Ngarrama Royal

Phone: 3646 3759
Indigenous Health Worker: 0428 404 875
Email: Ngarrama.royal@health.qld.gov.au
Level 5, Ned Hanlon Building,
Butterfield St, Herston



Indigenous Allied Health Cadets come together



Cadets are pictured with A&TSILT Director Sherry Holzapfel and Acting Allied Health Workforce Development Officer Jason Warnock (far left).

In July 2020, a gathering was held for seven newly recruited Indigenous Allied Health Cadets joining Metro North Hospital and Health Service.

The cadets were welcomed by the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership Team (A&TSILT) as well as staff from their support network such as line managers and supervisors.

The gathering provided an excellent opportunity for cadets to connect with one another and share their professional experiences within their chosen field of speciality.



Director of A&TSILT Sherry Holzapfel and Executive Director Metro North Allied Health Services Michelle Stute welcomed the cadets formally and spoke a little about their roles within Metro North and wished all the cadets well within their respective fields of work.

Both Sherry and Michelle encouraged the cadets to reach out if they required assistance and not to be afraid to ask questions.

“People are here to help you and guide you on your journey,” Sherry said.



Cadets also had the opportunity to sit down and yarn with A&TSILT Senior Project Officer William Bern.

William discussed his experiences and the process of transitioning theory and book work into practical on the job experiences.

William had a strong message that it's important for the cadets to stay together and stay connected and not be isolated. Cadets will be working in various fields from medical laboratory science and clinical exercise physiology to social work and physiotherapy.

Meet the Allied Health Cadets



Kiri Fabila

I am a proud descendant of the Djabera Djabera tribe from the Kimberley, WA.

I am studying Medical Laboratory Science at QUT.

I wasn't sure what degree to study at university, although I knew that I wanted to study something to do with science. I applied through the CASP program at QUT through the Oodgeroo unit, and it was at my interview that I had first heard about medical laboratory science, as the course coordinator was on the interviewing panel. I was very quickly convinced and have loved this degree from the start. I am very excited to work in a diagnostic lab as a graduate.

I hope to promote the medical lab science degree and career to the community, as it is not very well-known. I believe we are slowly growing our representation in the science field, so I am passionate about getting more of our young people engaged with hands on science.

My biggest advice is to go for any opportunities that you can commit to, whether it be through university, or applying for a traineeship or cadetship through another organisation such as this one. Every opportunity I've been involved with through my time at uni has always grown to other invaluable opportunities and experiences, academically and culturally.

Billie Mowett

My mob is Jagera Mununjali. They are from Purga Mission/Deebing Creek area – Beaudesert ways.

I am studying a Bachelor of Social Work at QUT.

I thought it would be interesting to experience work in an allied health position while I'm still studying and understand the work that is involved in allied health. Social work can be a very broad area to work in so having a foot in the door within allied health is an amazing opportunity for myself as an upcoming and emerging social worker.



I see this role helping mob and others in community because I have a passion for social justice and advocacy for First Nations people of Australia. I see my role being able to support my mob as I can advocate, support and bring awareness and teachings for my fellow colleagues to make sure they are all working in culturally aware and culturally responsive ways.

My advice would be to not overthink anything. Everyone who I have encountered are lovely and supportive, so don't let the voices in your head make you overthink the experience you may have while taking this career path.



Adrian Draper

Unfortunately I am not completely aware of my mob. I have been disconnected with my mum over the past few years and my Aboriginal heritage is from her side.

I am currently studying Bachelor of Clinical Exercise Physiology.

I love to help people!

My aim is to provide education around health to ensure my mob understand the benefits of exercise, physical activity and reduce the risk of diseases that can be managed or prevented via exercise.

My advice to others is make sure you are doing this to help people. Working in health is mainly people orientated.

Sahamar Ruben

Erub, Torres Strait Islands

I am currently studying Bachelor of Medical Laboratory Science at QUT.

Initially, I did not realise that my degree was taking me towards an allied health degree, however, I do know that I have always wanted to help people. I love the idea that I get to use science while doing so.

I see my role helping mob in the community as pathology has a huge part in almost every interaction a person has with a doctor. I hope to offer my gained knowledge from my degree in remote communities all around Queensland.



The advice I have other Indigenous cadets seeking this career path is to study hard but also have fun while at university. Apply for every and any opportunity along your way because you could gain knowledge in your future career while still studying.



Whitney Hunt

From my mother's side I am Whadjuk and Ballardong, on my father's side I am Kamilaroi and Barkingji.

I am currently studying a Bachelor of Clinical Exercise Physiology at the Queensland University of Technology.

Both of my parents are in the health sector and I have completed traineeships over the years as a hearing health worker, health worker and dental assistant. I always had an interest with human movements since high school, especially since my dad completed his masters at UQ.

My role as an exercise physiologist is intervention, prevention and maintenance of chronic disease. And due to the prevalence of chronic disease with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people it is important to implement a healthy relationship with exercise and why it is so important.

My advice to others is try to get as much exposure to the health industry as possible. There are so many different fields that you may be passionate about to help our mob.

Meagan Wood

Ngunnawal, Canberra

I am currently studying Bachelor of Physiotherapy at Australian Catholic University.

I wanted to pursue a career where I can really help people. Having a background of loving sports and movement, physiotherapy seemed like a good fit.

I think it's a good role to advocate for the health and wellbeing of all Indigenous peoples. I think having skilled, mindful Indigenous health professionals is a keyway to closing the gap.

My advice to others is go for it! Don't be afraid to put yourself out there and pursue all the opportunities you can. Physiotherapy is a very rewarding career choice and an opportunity to improve the quality of life of many different people in many ways!



Tori Large

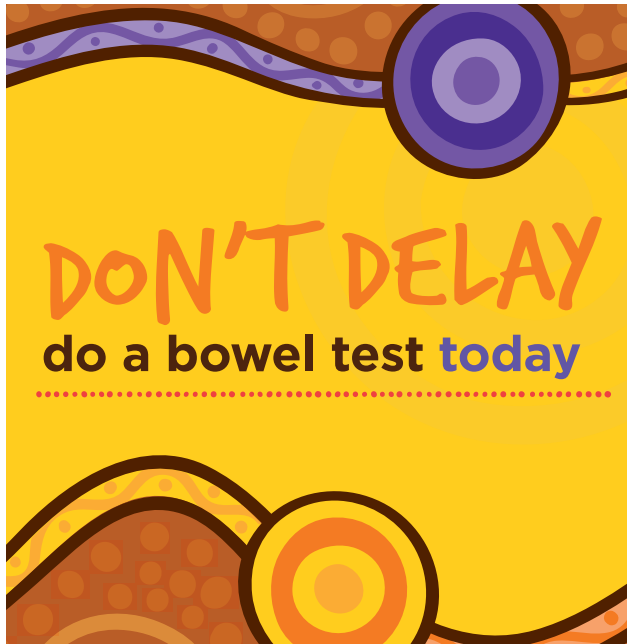
My mob's originally from WA, we're Noongar Yuat people. But since Nan moved to Queensland years ago, we now live on Gubbi Gubbi, Yuggera and Bundjalung country.

I am currently studying Bachelor of Social Work at Queensland University of Technology.

I decided to study social work because I have a big belief in human rights and social justice. I want to feel like I'm making a difference through working closely with people.

My aim is to build safe and trusting environments for people to receive health care and feeling like they are being looked after by our own or people who understand.

My advice to others is, try to make the most out of the opportunities you get. You really have to step outside of your comfort zone in social work, so just give it a go and be open to learning from it!



Bowel screening can save lives

Only one in five eligible Indigenous Australians participate in the National Bowel Cancer Screening Program, a rate significantly lower than that of other Australians (40.8%).

More than 80 Australians die from bowel cancer every week. If detected early, 90% of cases can be successfully treated.

The screening program reduces the impact of bowel cancer by allowing early detection, intervention and treatment. Eligible people aged 50-74 are invited to screen for bowel cancer every two years. A test kit is mailed to them to complete at home and return to the program's pathology laboratory for analysis. There is no cost involved and results are provided to the patient and their GP within two weeks.

Health professionals, such as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers and community liaison officers, are encouraged to discuss bowel screening with their patients aged 50-74 and recommend they participate, if clinically relevant.

For more information and access to promotional resources, please visit www.cancerscreening.gov.au/.

QueenMode Wellbeing Tips

QueenMode Collective is a community of women established to support, empower and inspire each other and all women of colour by delivering a holistic approach to developing greater self-awareness. It was founded by Elena Wangurra, a Warramiri and Triestina woman from North-east Arnhem Land. Elena travelled Australia and internationally performing with the desire to know more about the world.

Included in this article are some health and wellbeing tips supplied by QueenMode Collective to assist stress, anxiety, help keep energised and focused as well as emotionally and physically healthy. Take some time for yourself and have a go at some of these activities. If you would like access to the full wellbeing work book please visit <https://metronorth.health.qld.gov.au/better-together-van/2020-naidoc-virtual-event>

DAILY PRACTICES TO KEEP YOU HEALTHY, ENERGISED & FOCUSED



Set a timer to check in with yourself 3 times throughout your day when you're feeling stressed.

Use this check in to bring awareness to your emotional, physical and mental state. Take this opportunity to readjust how you feel and get back into balance.



Make time to be with the people that fill your cup, if you're feeling particularly low, physically or mentally.

Being around our loved ones positively reinforces our sense of belonging and significance, to very important requirements for our mental health and well being.



To ensure your body is functioning at it's optimal level, feeding yourself healthy nutritious meals and snacks is very important. Starting the day off with high fibre, with healthy fat's in your meals, stimulates your metabolism, incorporating nuts, berries and seeds in your snacks ensure a steady outflow of energy through the day, and leaving 4 hours between large meals regulates your insulin levels.



Principal Research Fellow Adrienne Young (front left) pictured with Ngarrama Maternity staff and Allied Health colleagues.

Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital – Maternity Allied Health Service Access

The Maternity Allied Health Service Access project is looking to find out from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and communities about how allied health services meet their needs during and after pregnancy.

The project is in partnership with the Ngarrama Maternity program and midwives at Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital and with community partners to look into the key areas of social work, nutrition, dietetics and physiotherapy.

Principal Research Fellow Adrienne Young said the initiative was driven by data and provided an exciting opportunity to think and start talking about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.

"The idea really came about from data as we were looking at the engagement with allied health services for our culturally diverse populations and it was striking the failure to attend rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women for maternal health services," Adrienne said.

"The funding will help us dedicate the time to finding out what women and families want and need, find out how far our service delivery models are from that and together develop what the ideal service model will look like. Hopefully this will allow us to put this model into action and see if the model has improved engagement and health outcomes.

"Across our departments there are seeds of interest and I think this project will allow us to achieve good outcomes in the maternal health space. Hopefully it will be uncovering what we can be doing better as a whole workforce."

Metro North Hospital and Health Service – PEPA Viewing Blanket

The PEPA Viewing Blanket initiative provides the opportunity to improve the experience for Indigenous palliative patients and their families as well as families and community members visiting deceased loved ones in the hospital setting.

The project will involve Indigenous inspired sheets for the recovery of a loved one as the family come in as opposed to a standard Queensland Health white or blue linen sheet. The sheets will be available for the mortuaries across Metro North, emergency departments and intensive care units for families to see their loved ones and say goodbye before that person is moved to the mortuary or wherever the viewing is requested.

Program of Experience in the Palliative Approach (PEPA) Indigenous Project Officer Eliza Munro said another component is looking at comfort blankets to give to the palliative care wards at The Prince Charles Hospital and Redcliffe Hospital for Indigenous patients. The patient will use the blanket and once they pass it will be given to the family as an option to take home as a tribute to their loved one.

"If we can make the end of life journey a nicer experience and a bit more pleasant, it's a better memory and can help with the grieving process and healing," Eliza said.

The concept provides the opportunity to educate non-Indigenous health professionals in the delivery of culturally sensitive end-of-life care and after life care to assist in decreasing the impacts of trauma when dealing with sorry business.

Eliza said the initiative was inspired by her Aunt, Mary Munro from Armidale New South Wales.

"She worked in the hospital system for quite a while and would get upset when loved ones would come into the mortuary to see their loved ones covered in a white sheet. She started making blankets with the Aboriginal flag from home. The families wouldn't keep the blankets but it was there for when a family came in.

"We have a significant amount of sorry business and this happens in every community. When she was telling me about

it, I said 'Aunt you need to let me share this'. She is happy and very proud to be able to not only help her community but communities in other places. I need to acknowledge her every step of the way," Eliza said.



Director of Learning and Development Centre for Palliative Care Research & Education, John Haberecht, accepting the grant on behalf of Eliza Munro.



Redcliffe Hospital Get Set for Prep Project Team pictured with A&TSILT Director Sherry Holzapfel.

Redcliffe Hospital – Get Set for Prep

Redcliffe Hospital's Get Set for Prep program aims to provide a prep readiness program for kindergarten aged children and will be run by an Allied Health Assistant offering seven sessions during the school term. The sessions will cover language, literacy and fine motor skills, as well as healthy lunch boxes and eating habits.

The program target is to reach 120 Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander children with a seven-week block of sessions. Week 1 will look at health pre-screening to measure the skills of the child, with a post health screening at the end of the program to assess progress of the child.

Senior Paediatric Speech Pathologist Jessica Hajdu said the program will help support children getting ready for school to enable them to listen, learn and be healthy.

"We know as health professionals how critical those early years of education are and for children to be as ready as they possibly can. This will set them up for a life of enjoying education, school and engaging with health professionals," Jessica said.

"All of these things are so important lifelong, not just in prep. It seems like such a small intervention but hopefully it has a lifelong and positive effect for the children and families."

The program is designed to also build relationships with the health service and hospital in general so Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community feel safe and welcomed to access services.

"Our services operate in the outpatients department and we have no capacity to run group programs across allied health disciplines.

"We might get a lot of referrals for kindy aged children individually but we thought to target an ingroup setting, with the families also coming along. Having a social gathering is a much a nicer environment than in clinic and individual sessions," Jessica said.

The team is planning to partner with the new Better Together Health Van to run the sessions in local parks. If you're interested in your child attending the program, email for further information RED-Get-Set-For-Prep@health.qld.gov.au

Community and Oral Health – SaFE Child Protection Training

The SaFE Child Protection Training project is to develop a module that integrates a culturally sensitive framework within the current online MNHHS Child Protection training package. The module will educate clinical and non-clinical staff on how to better respond to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families that might be experiencing difficulties with child protection issues.

The aim of the project is to reduce the likelihood that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families will come under the scrutiny, unnecessarily, of Child Protection authorities and will add to break the cycle of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children entering the Child Protection system.

Indigenous Social Worker at Community and Oral Health Madeline Mitchell oversees the Child Protection portfolio and is a member of the Child Protection Community of Practice.

"My interest in this portfolio, as an Aboriginal woman and a Social Worker is the over representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children within Child Protection systems," Madeline said.

"The Child Protection Community of Practice has developed the SaFE - Child Safety Awareness Clinical and non-Clinical Online Training, even though I had contributed to this training package we still thought a specific module around culturally sensitive practice would be valuable education for MNHHS staff."

Madeline said the program will build trust within local communities and the wider Indigenous Queensland communities who come through the MNHHS health systems. Additionally, the workforce will have a sense of being comfortable delivering culturally sensitive health care for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and families.

"What excites me about this project is the hope that the results from this educational module will inform staff of appropriate referral pathways and improve early intervention strategies.

"Making change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is what drove me to become a social worker. I hope with change, even if it is minor, will allow families to live and grow together in a healthy safe environment," Madeline said.



L-R: Community and Oral Health Indigenous Social Worker Madeline Mitchell, Indigenous Allied Health Cadet Tori Large and A&TSILT Director Sherry Holzapfel.



Community and Oral Health Consumer Liaison Officer Denielle Beattie with A&TSILT Director Sherry Holzapfel.

Community and Oral Health – Deadly Smiles Pilot Project

The Deadly Smiles project is a pilot oral health promotion and early screening initiative targeting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children aged 0-17 and their families in the Moreton Bay Region.

The project will provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children with a monthly oral health screening and a fluoride varnishing program in a culturally appropriate setting such as early childhood centres, schools, neighbourhood centres or community health clinics and the setting will establish a dental home for consumers and their families.

To ensure sustainability, the project will link with established programs such as Lift the Lip – an early screening program for children to identify tooth decay and offer appropriate referral pathways – and Smarter Smiles – a program offered to year 7 students at Dakabin High School that incorporates oral health screening, referral pathways, preventative treatments, oral health education and establishment of a dental home.

Local studies identified the Moreton Bay Region, particularly Redcliffe and Caboolture, has a high proportion of children who are known to be at high risk of developing oral health disease. By the time they present for their first dental appointments in the public sector at the age of 4 years, most of their deciduous teeth have been compromised due to advancing decay or developed white spot lesions. Local data has shown that most children do not present for treatment until the age of seven or later, and often for more advanced treatments like complex extractions and at this point hospitalisation and anaesthetic is usually required which then increases costs and associated risk.

The project aims to:

- Break down barriers to Indigenous children and families accessing preventative dental care

- Establish a familiar and culturally appropriate dental home
- Improve the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who complete their dental course of care
- Improve oral health literacy for children and families
- Increase awareness and self-efficacy of good oral health hygiene (include provision of toothbrush/toothpaste)
- Decrease dental decay risk through a fluoride varnishing program
- Improve dental referral pathways
- Upskill staff and enhance capacity to identify and refer children to oral health services

Community and Oral Health Consumer Liaison Officer Denielle Beattie said the project will allow sustainable partnerships with local Indigenous Primary Care providers, other Hospital and Health Services, local early childhood services and schools as well as strengthen relationships with internal Metro North staff including Oral Health, Ngarrama Maternity Service, Child Health Nurses and Indigenous Health Workers.

“This will allow us to establish integrated models of care which allows smooth transition within and across services,” Denielle said.

“We know from findings from a recent study on the impact of oral health on Australian urban Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families, that families viewed oral health as an important health issue, however other social determinants of health impacted their ability to maintain oral health to a desired standard.

“Knowing this, the Deadly Smiles projects allows us to use health promotion models to address these challenges. We can target those ready for change and provide them with Oral health education and promotion, build their self-efficacy to support good oral health behaviours and outcomes.”

Mental Health – Aboriginal Mental Health First Aid Training

Indigenous mental health workers will be accredited to provide Aboriginal mental health First Aid training (AMHFA), equipping them with skills and knowledge to assist their co-workers when they are providing treatment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples experiencing a mental health problem or in a mental health crisis.

The project was identified through feedback from Indigenous health workers requiring the necessary skills and knowledge to support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples when presenting for a mental health condition. Health workers identified that consumers weren't effectively supported both culturally and effectively when providing advocacy during assessment by clinical treating teams.

By providing health workers and other staff with AMHFA training, Indigenous health workers and clinicians can implement an evidence-based practice that is culturally safe, connected and provides an effective patient journey for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers.

Indigenous Mental Health Lead Chris Henaway said the AMHFA course covers a range of subjects that will provide staff with the skills, knowledge and behaviours that are required to plan, support, improve and deliver services in a culturally respectful and appropriate manner.

“Gaps in cultural understanding can lead to misdiagnosis or mental disorders remaining undiagnosed. In addition, clinicians would benefit from understanding how to incorporate culture into therapy, as culture can be both a protective factor which promotes and builds resilience, and a therapeutic tool which can aid recovery,” Chris said.

“Non-Indigenous clinicians must be able to interpret presenting ‘symptoms’ from the perspective of a person within an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander culture. The skills, knowledge and behaviours of non-Indigenous mental health staff can be significantly enhanced through practical training and tools enabling cultural capability to be embedded into clinical practice.

“Training of non-Indigenous clinical staff can include brokering the cross fertilisation of skills between community-controlled health services and state-run mental health services through mentoring, in-reach, shared care models, referral and discharge protocols.

“Actively addressing stigma, racism and discrimination to Indigenous clients within health services is also crucial to building a culturally capable mental health service.”

Indigenous Mental Health Lead Chris Henaway with A&TSILT Director Sherry Holzapfel





Aleacha Hopkins (left) with Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officers Jarrod Parter and Michelle Pieper and A&TSILT Director Sherry Holzapfel (right).

The Prince Charles Hospital – Emergency Department Indigenous Hospital Liaison

The project will see the introduction of a seven-day Indigenous Hospital Liaison service to The Prince Charles Hospital adult and paediatric emergency departments.

The newly created position will provide an Indigenous workforce presence that is culturally safe, visible and enhances access to culturally appropriate support.

The dedicated role will be an opportunity for a collaborative approach between the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce and clinical streams in the emergency departments (ED).

Indigenous Hospital Liaison Team Leader Aleacha Hopkins said the project was developed in consultation with the social work department after data showed a high presentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients within the adult and paediatric emergency departments.

The research showed ‘Did Not Wait’ and ‘Discharge Against Medical Advice’ for patients was happening outside the shift hours for the Indigenous Hospital Liaison staff and highlighted the need for a dedicated role.

“What I am most excited about this project is the Indigenous Hospital Liaison service will have a seven-day operational service within the ED working closely with multidisciplinary teams for the better health comes of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples,” Aleacha said.

“The position will benefit both identified Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander patients who present to the ED, as well as clinical staff to build awareness and understanding of the importance of diversity and inclusion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures across work practices, communication and interactions amongst staff.”

Caboolture Hospital – Emergency Department Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer

A dedicated Indigenous Hospital Liaison Officer will be located within the Caboolture Hospital emergency department Monday to Friday.

The aim is to improve the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patient journey through the emergency department, to collect data in service shortfalls and provide feedback to better understand the needs to improve health delivery and compliance with care plans.

The management team at Caboolture Hospital found the department had a high number of patient complaints from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander consumers and has since partnered with Traditional Owners and other Elders of the land. The Elders identified a further service gap with the young Indigenous community accessing and staying to

access healthcare within the Emergency Department.

Caboolture emergency department nurse Megan Sinclair (pictured) said the success of the project will be measured on a decrease in complaints and reduction in ‘Discharge Against Medical Advice’ and ‘Did Not Wait’ rates within the service.



“The initiative is a pilot of an Indigenous ED/Community Liaison Officer at Caboolture emergency department. It is intended the role will improve the discharge process from ED back to the community, decrease the number of ‘discharge against medical advice’ and ‘left after treatment commenced’ and address any patient complaints or concerns at the time of contact or soon after,” Megan said.

The hospital hopes the trial of the role will lead to a full-time position in the department and further improve the Indigenous health gap whilst providing an employment opportunity for Indigenous staff.

“The Indigenous Liaison Officer will integrate a cultural support role in order to improve the patient journey, bridge the gap by having an increased and visible presence and formal representation with the local Elder group,” Megan said.

Melaleuca Clinic introduces culturally inviting artwork

If you're visiting Chermiside Community Health Centre, you will notice the doors of Melaleuca Clinic have recently been transformed with colourful artwork designed by Aboriginal artist Elaine Chambers-Hegarty.

This artwork represents Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men and women and how culture and community connection is important to First Nations people.

Louise Durant, Nurse Unit Manager, says the artwork is symbolic of goodwill, mutual respect and understanding the effects of colonisation on our First Nations people. She further stated it was placed on the entry to Melaleuca to signify efforts towards reconciliation and that the clinic welcomes our First Nations people and is here to help.

Clinical Nurse/Case Manager Ashley Mayer is part of the Metro North Mental Health Reconciliation Action Plan Committee and working with clinic staff to create a workplace culture that understands, values and respects the histories, cultures and contributions of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

The clinic currently engages with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Health Services. Louise and Ashley also hope to implement shared care arrangements of opiate replacement therapy and withdrawal management.

"We hope that by having artwork at the entrance it will help our clients feel safe to identify as a culturally appropriate and supportive service," Louise said.

"Since introducing the artwork, it has helped the clinic staff reflect on their own culture, attitudes and beliefs about others. The clinic has implemented open, respectful, clear communication, as well as recognising and avoiding stereotypical barriers. So far feedback has been positive with consumers commenting about how appealing the artwork is and how the clinic is more inviting."



L-R Nurse Unit Manager, Louise Durant and Clinical Nurse/ Case Manager Ashley Mayer.

Louise said Melaleuca staff have been educated on the meaning of the artwork and its significance to the service and are happy to discuss the artwork with anyone who enquires.

It's hoped with the assistance of Ashley on the Reconciliation Action Plan committee the clinic will increase the number and engagement of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people that enter the service as consumers and colleagues.

Louise and Ashley anticipate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people will view Melaleuca Clinic as a safe place for themselves and family to enter, have a yarn, a coffee and be able to discuss their drug or alcohol use, and how Melaleuca can best assist.

Should you have any enquires and wish to contact Melaleuca Clinic they can be reached on 3139 4080. You can also contact them via fax on 3139 4155 and email on melaleuca@health.qld.gov.au For community and GP referrals you must go through ADIS (Alcohol and Drug Information Support) and call 1800 177 833. The website has further information: <https://adis.health.qld.gov.au/>

We are open! Make breast screening a priority for your health

BreastScreen Queensland Brisbane Northside Service have reopened after the temporary suspension in screening services in response to COVID-19.

Breast cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in Indigenous women and the second most common cause of cancer death. Indigenous Australians currently participate in breast screening at a lower rate than non-Indigenous Australians, meaning breast cancers are diagnosed later and mortality is higher.

We understand that women may have some concerns about attending for screening at this time. To minimise the risk from COVID-19, we have implemented a range of social distancing measures, hygiene practices and increased cleaning. The wellbeing of you and our staff are our top priority.

Encouragement by a primary healthcare professional, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers and community liaison officers, is proven to increase participation in screening programs. Health workers and community liaison officers are encouraged to discuss breast screening with their patients aged 40 years and over and recommend participation. Breast screening is free, takes 30 minutes, and is performed by female health professionals.

Unfortunately, due to social distancing measures, we are unable to coordinate group bookings at this time.

To make an appointment, please call us on 13 20 50 or visit us online at www.breastscreen.qld.gov.au.

BreastScreen

AUSTRALIA

A joint Australian, State and Territory Government Program

Catching it early Can give you a long time later

Getting tested for breast cancer can save your life.



So by having a free BreastScreen test every two years, you can make sure any problems are found, even before you can feel them.

You can take a friend or family member if it makes you feel more comfortable.

A female worker will help you, and she'll make sure you feel relaxed and safe.

The breast screen is done in private, and only takes a few minutes. It's free for women aged **50 to 74**.

If you're over 75, talk to your GP or health professional to find out if breast screening is right for you.

Breast screening. It's an invitation that could save your life.



Australian Government

australia.gov.au/breastscreen

Call

13 20 50

Farewell to Aunty Stella Wake

In late June, Community and Oral Health diabetes service farewellled Aunty Stella Wake in a moving guard of honour at North Lakes Health Precinct.

Staff from across the precinct gathered as she walked down the steps from her office one last time, with lots of clapping, cheers and well wishes provided on her journey to retirement.

Stella has brought comfort and happiness to patients and staff across Metro North and many are sad to see her go.

Before her final day, Community and Oral Health Administration Support Officer Vaughan Travers spent some time with Aunty learning about her journey as a nurse, career highlights and life lessons for the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals.



Can you tell me where you worked before Queensland Health?

I moved to Brisbane in 1999 to help support my son and granddaughter. My son needed my help. He was studying at the University of Queensland and living at St Lucia at the time. I had arrived in Brisbane on the Sunday and asked my son for a local paper so I could check out jobs in nursing homes close to the area. I saw a position at a Nursing home located in Chelmer it was called Neilson Home for Women and was run by Anglicare. I approached the facility on the Monday morning and spoke with the Director of Nursing and told her I needed a job as a personal carer. She took my application and stated she would get in touch with me if she needed me. I went home and about 11am the same day I received a call from her asking if I could do an afternoon shift to which I replied of course 'yes, I can'. This is how my career in nursing resumed in Brisbane.

Can you tell us why you chose nursing as a career?

I had always wanted to be a nurse when I was a little girl and I read the story about Florence Nightingale. I just wanted to be like her! At 14 years old I went to Bowen District Hospital (dressed in my school uniform) and asked to talk to someone in charge. The Matron came out and asked me what I wanted, and I told her I wanted to be a Nurse. She asked me how old I was, and I told her I was 14 to which she replied 'come back and see me in a couple of years and I will tell you how you go about being a nurse'.

When I was 17 years old and about to complete my senior studies, I was offered a job in a local business as a junior clerk and I didn't pursue a career in nursing. My boss at the time was very generous and gave me leave to complete and finish my Senior Certificate.

Aunty Stella Wake (front) with the COH Diabetes Team

Can you tell me about your family history and where your mob's from?

I am a North Queenslander born in Bowen a small seaside town. I am first born child of Thomas and Ethel Gaston, the eldest of eight children, five boys and three girls. My brother born after me, had passed away as a baby from Hydrocephalus or 'water on the brain' this would have been a very sad time for both Mum and Dad. Mum (on her own) had to bring him down to Brisbane to visit a specialist but he passed away down there. Dad stayed in Bowen to take care of me. Poor Mum had to travel back to Bowen without my brother, he is buried somewhere here in Brisbane. I will attempt to find out where he is buried. His name was Tommy and he was named after my Dad. My Dad's mob is Juru and my Mum's mob is Jangga. I'm proud to say I'm a Jangga/Juru person. Juru/Jangga is part of the Whitsundays region and out to Claremont.





Aunt Stella Wake pictured at a Farewell Afternoon tea prior to retirement in June 2020.

I was working in accounts at another local business and I used to send out the accounts daily when I just got up one day and resigned. I went straight to the local nursing home and asked the Director of Nursing there for a job as a personal carer. After interviewing me, she asked if I could start straight away and I said yes. I started work there that afternoon as they were short staffed, and I also assisted them as an Activity Officer.

When I completed my Diploma of Nursing in 2008, I was working as an Activity Officer in an Aged Care facility at Taigum and I applied for a position in the Extended Care Unit at the Prince Charles Hospital. I thought I must have missed out on the position when two weeks had passed and I hadn't heard back about whether I got the job or not. One day I received a phone call from a lady called Mary Massey asking me if I would be interested in working in Diabetes as they were looking for an Enrolled Nurse in the Diabetes Service at Caboolture. I explained I didn't know anything about Diabetes. She said that was ok and I would soon learn about it. I also told her I was Aboriginal, and she said that was ok to. I asked her when she wanted me to start and she answered 'right now'. I accepted the job and was advised I would get a call from Janice Kerrigan (Nurse Unit Manager) giving me details of when to start and so forth. I started working in Diabetes in December 2008 at Caboolture.

What have been some of the highs/ lows/challenges throughout your career?

Some highlights for me is winning a CISS Staff Excellence Award; being an Infection Control Officer within the Diabetes team; Fire Warden duties and my role as Metro North Staff Yarns Ambassador which was very rewarding. I am very proud of these achievements. No lows to speak of in my career. Some challenges I faced included learning new processes for the Doctor's clinic I assist with. There was all sorts of processes and procedures regarding meeting clients, making observations and reading a chart. Something I struggled with at one stage was public speaking and my confidence. I was asked to give a PowerPoint presentation on Gestational Diabetes to a group of pregnant ladies. This was the first time I had taken on such an activity and I was very nervous at first speaking to the group and I worried about the technology and my delivery.

Have you found it to be a rewarding career?

Everything I dreamed it would be and more in terms of nursing. I had pictured myself in a hospital ward doing rounds but happily landed with clients in community and helping and advising my mob. Working with colleagues has been amazing I have felt part of a team and accepted, valued, loved, respected and some even call me boss.

Who inspires you? (Work and Life)

Professionally, I would have to say Florence Nightingale as I stated earlier. I saw her and just wanted to be her, she is the reason why I wanted to be a nurse. Florence Nightingale was a British nurse who laid the foundation of modern nursing. 2020 is the International Year of the Nurse and Midwife which commemorates Florence Nightingale's 200th birthday anniversary and all modern nurses and midwives across the world who devote their lives to caring for others.

In life my parents will always inspire me. For the life they endured and what they went through and the strength and knowledge they passed to me. Dad was involved in the Army and served in World War II as well as the Middle East. He also suffered through the effects of the Stolen Generation where his sisters were removed from the family.

He went to great lengths to reconnect and come down to Brisbane to bring them home. Mum, the matriarch she was gentle but strong. She was well loved and respected through the community. What resonated with me was that she stayed true to who she was. I draw strength and inspiration from that, and it has made me the strong woman I am today.

What has been one of the most memorable moments?

The most memorable moments I have are with my clients. They make me smile. I am always happy to see them and they're always warm and welcoming which makes it easy to build rapport and respect. A positive patient story is a client that came into gym who previously had a stroke and struggled initially with everything. Over time and many visits, he managed to gain confidence and together in weekly exercise with me and the team as well as the clients he was able to lift himself up physically and mentally. It was a noticeable change we saw which brought me a lot of joy and is certainly a satisfying part of the job. He is a chatterbox but comes out with some of the most incredible words and sayings and is now a client favourite in the weekly appointments.

You have worked in the diabetes area for a long time now, and diabetes is a disease many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people suffer from, what advice do you have for the community in terms of prevention and those living with the disease?

Firstly, I want to stress that diabetes doesn't stop what you want to do in life. You can be active, have fun and still enjoy life e.g. sports, socialising and travelling. Don't give up and don't give in. Diabetes can be managed and many are doing this daily throughout community and indeed the world. In terms of prevention I urge clients to visit their GP frequently and attend all appointments. Take medication prescribed to you and please take note of the information, detail and times of when to take this as it is very important. Finally, I recommend healthy eating including a good diet and exercise as this will go a long way to make you feel better and help treat this disease.

What advice do you have for the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander nurses?

Always be respectful to clients and colleagues. You can have a laugh and be fun loving but remember your demeanour and what others will observe. People can and will look to you and remember your actions can inspire. Be a good listener, be willing to yarn and engage. Always be caring and compassionate no matter the area or clients. I believe everything should be done wholeheartedly, your heart should be in what you want to do, and this will help your passion and drive to be successful. Be professional, have the motivation and mindset to give your all and to be the best nurse you can be.

What are you most looking forward to in retirement i.e. hobbies?

This is so exciting for me I can now work through a list I've compiled. I look forward to attending craft classes with my neighbour. I look forward to travelling again within Australia, obviously back home to Bowen but also other parts of Australia and the world when borders re-open again. A big thing for me will be to spend time with my children and grandchildren. My hope is to be more available and attentive to their needs to help and support where I can and be more involved in their lives. Most people won't know this but when I was younger, I was a keen sewer, mending and dressmaker. I had many colleagues who would give me their work and other clothes to alter and fix. Sometimes I think I should have had a shop. I would like to touch base with some of that again. I will enjoy some shopping and gardening time as it is relaxing, and I love these activities. Finally, housework I get time to focus on this in my own way and time. I am somewhat of a perfectionist.

Can you share some final words of wisdom?

Stay true to yourself, stand tall, be strong and proud. Give your all and be the best nurse you can be.

Thank you, Auntie, for sharing your story and everyone at Metro North wishes you a happy and fulfilling retirement.

IN THE NEWS

Protecting Indigenous bush foods and medicines against biopiracy

A UNSW professor of environmental management is ensuring the benefits of products developed from local bushfood and medicine are fed back to Indigenous peoples and local communities >> <https://bit.ly/2Dm1ano>

Patty Mills Launches Indigenous Basketball Australia

Australian Boomer and San Antonio Spurs player, Patrick (Patty) Mills has announced the launch of Indigenous Basketball Australia (IBA), a program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to play basketball. The IBA will begin at a grassroots level, offering skill development programs across Australia, aiming to provide opportunities for young Indigenous Australians to reach elite level basketball around the world. >> <https://bit.ly/2C4Y7PE>

Closing the Gap agreement reset with 16 new targets to improve lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians

All Australian governments have committed to 16 targets to tackle Indigenous disadvantage, after the previous Closing the Gap scheme largely failed in its aims, year after year. The agreement completely resets targets set in 2008, and promises far greater Indigenous involvement in leading its implementation and measuring its progress — a significant change from the previous strategy. >> <https://ab.co/2C4jmkA>

Indigenous mural on hospital walls helps heal cultural divide

The walls of Port Lincoln hospital are providing a unique blank canvas for cultural and physical healing. The Eyre and Far North Local Health Network has commissioned a 28-metre mural that will weave through the hospital painting a story of healing.

Chief executive Verity Paterson said it was part of a push to include more Indigenous art in the 11 health units and hospitals under the network across outback South Australia and Eyre Peninsula. >> <https://ab.co/3ihfT1D>

Brother to Brother hotline is helping Indigenous men during the pandemic

A new 24-hour crisis line for Aboriginal Men has been set up to provide extra support during the coronavirus pandemic. The service was created by Dardi Munwurro, an organisation that delivers a range of family violence programs specifically targeting Aboriginal men. The crisis number is 1800 435 799 >> <https://ab.co/2PtXSk7>

Indigenous mental health program goes online

Telehealth delivery of an Indigenous mental health program is being trialled by The University of Queensland, so care is not disrupted by coronavirus restrictions. UQ Associate Professor Dr Maree Toombs said the restrictions in access to high-risk communities and social-distancing measures are presenting major difficulties communicating with participants of the Indigenous Model of Mental Health Care (IMMHC) project. >> <https://bit.ly/30xgciG>

Strength in the face of adversity

As the director of the First Peoples Health Unit at Griffith University, Professor Roianne West is not only training the next generation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workers, but challenging the wider health system and workforce. >> <https://bit.ly/33z9Sct>

“Just ‘cause you make it look black doesn’t make it black”: why the WellMob website was launched

Worimi man David Edwards, co-Director of WellMob, and Judy Singer, from the University Centre for Rural Health at the University of Sydney, talk about the community insights and priorities that have that have led to WellMob, a new website to host Indigenous-specific wellbeing resources for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The idea for WellMob came from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health professionals and community members living on Bundjalung country in Northern New South Wales who were a key stakeholder in its development. >> <https://bit.ly/3a3mZ6P>

A Day in the Life of Kiris Reis: Clinical Nurse, Royal Brisbane and Women's Hospital, Emergency and Trauma Centre



Where is your family from?

My mother is Ahmat, and we are from Badu Island, Torres Strait, and we are Wagadagam people and my totem is crocodile. I still maintain a strong connection with my family and place even though I live such a long way away.

Why did you decide on becoming a nurse?

Didn't know what to do after school until an Uncle passed away, and I saw firsthand how communication is vital in health care, I wanted to bridge that gap. This is important because families may not know or realise a family member is sick until we have sad news, I always thought of this impact and the burden it leaves families with.

What is rewarding about your job?

So much, some days it can be tough. I help people and try make a difference during their tested times they're experiencing, being compassionate and caring for people.

There is a reason people come to ED, it is very traumatic and scary experience, besides my professional role, being there for people is also rewarding, even if its holding someone's hand.

Another rewarding role I play is to increase the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander engagement and health journey, I am excited about that.

What would a typical day look like in your job?

Being an emergency department in a very big hospital, each day is never the same, we can never plan the day. We can have heavy traumatic cases and or have a baby being born. You don't know what will come through the door.

What do you hope to achieve in your role?

Clinically, I learnt a lot. Now I want to achieved better Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health experience for community members. Support better health journey for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and better health experiences in the emergency department and link care in ED to the wards through to discharge, or, ED to discharge. That's my biggest goals, is to help people meet their health goals.

What is your work journey prior to working at the RBWH?

I transitioned from study at QUT on an Indigenous Cadetship at the RBWH, I graduated from the trauma and orthopaedic ward to new graduate nurse in the emergency department. I also work at two locations, one at the Southern Queensland Centre of Excellence in Inala and at the RBWH emergency department.

What do you like to do when you are not working?

I like to rest and unpack by spending time with family, with my partner. I love exercising. I have three nephews, whom I love spending time with, and I love to bake cakes and deserts and love decorating wedding cake and birthday cakes.

My message to readers:

Make goals and work towards them and you'll get there. Don't let anything stop you.

**WORD
OF THE MONTH**
“Deea (Dee-ah)”
is “teeth” in
Turubul Language


Turubul is the name of one of the languages spoken in the Brisbane area north to Caboolture and the Sunshine Coast. Linguistic research, including AUSTLANG and AIATSIS indicate there is some uncertainty around Turubul including whether it refers to a dialect or a group within the North Brisbane Region. Historical documentation from settlers, missionaries and others record words from Turubul since the 1840's. There are shared words between Turrbal and neighbouring languages of Kabi Kabi to the north and Yugara/Yuggera to the south. As Aboriginal languages were oral-based, the spelling of Turubul and Turubul language may differ in historical document and other sources; for example Turubul has also been spelt Turrbul, Turubul, Turrabal, Toorbal, Tarabu.

Source and further information - SLQ Indigenous Languages Webpages: www.slq.qld.gov.au/resources/atsi/languages

A close-up photograph of a woman with freckles and green eyes, smiling gently. She is holding a sleeping baby who has a pacifier in their mouth. The background is blurred, suggesting an outdoor setting.

Let's get tested so we know if there's COVID-19 in our community. Let's protect our community! ”

If you are sick and do continue to engage with people in community, you may be spreading the virus without knowing it. Get tested today.

A stylized icon of a virus particle with a circular head and radiating lines.

Metro North Hospital and Health Service is conducting COVID-19 screening at fever clinics and community assessment clinics at a range of locations. To find the latest testing centre information, visit the Queensland Health website at <https://bit.ly/33I9PLu>

Keep updated by following the Metro North Hospital and Health Service Better Together Health Van Facebook Page [@BetterTogetherHealthVan](#) [#keepmobsafe](#) [#keepamlesafe](#) [#bettertogether](#)

SUPPORTING OUR DIVERSE WORKFORCE

Did you know you can now record or amend your diversity data at any time through Streamline?

Simply **log on** to Streamline to update and record your EEO status.



Pay advices



Payment summaries



Loans and overpayments



Enquiries



Diversity data
Maintain your diversity information

Response to these questions will provide Queensland Health with a starting point to identify the strategies and programs needed to build more diverse and inclusive workplaces, including:

- ✓ to help understand the diversity of the workforce;
- ✓ to track progress in meeting the workforce diversity targets;
- ✓ to target diversity groups that are under-represented in the workforce;
- ✓ a starting point to identify new programs or approaches to increasing our workforce diversity.



Debra Devers

**Staff Yarns Ambassador
Metro North Corporate Services**

Deb, an Administration Officer for more than 45 years states she wanted to become a Staff Yarns Ambassador because “I want to achieve and help get the job done!”

Deb is very proud to identify as Aboriginal and invites all to “Come join my yarning circle at the Metro North Yarns!”

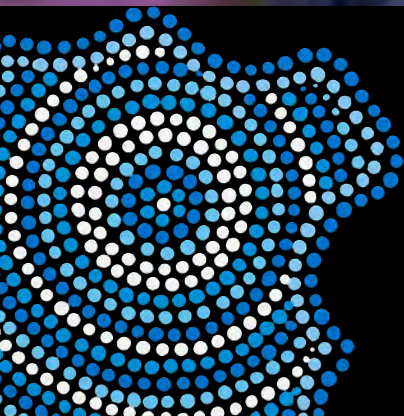


Join up today!

An online community for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff at Metro North Hospital and Health Service.

Join the online discussion and the cultural connection within the workplace. Search ‘Metro North Staff Yarns’ on QHEPS to join.

For further information phone 07 3139 4912 or email MNstaffyarns@health.qld.gov.au





Better Together Health Van

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 for up-to-date locations of the Van
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.



Make 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 Bettertogetherhealthvan@health.qld.gov.au

The service is owned and operated by Metro North Hospital and Health Service (MNHHS). 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 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Unit Communications Manager Renee Simon at Renee.Simon@health.qld.gov.au or phone (07) 3139 3235.



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