Closing the Gap on Aboriginal Health in the Upper Blue Mountains
The Beginning;

• Early 2012…..
• Hospital staff identified that there was an underrepresentation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders within the hospital patient numbers
• Approached by the local Aboriginal community with the aim of forming a reconciliation committee within the hospital- they had identified a lack of knowledge and understanding of services within the hospital
• Hospital wanted to do something for Reconciliation Week on both sites – multicultural health also wanted to undertake some promotion
Building the committee...

• Committee would be co-chaired by representatives from the community - Sue Tate and Kerrin O’Grady
• Meet six times a year
• Hospital Executive Rep would attend every meeting + provide secretarial support

Membership would consist of:
• Local Aboriginal community
• Interested hospital employees + Education rep
• Volunteers
The Aim...

- To increase the awareness of the services and to increase the utilisation of those services by the Aboriginal and TS Islander communities
- To make the hospital as welcoming as possible to the Aboriginal and TS Islander community to increase their engagement with services
- Ultimate Aim - to “Close the Gap” in health outcomes today.
The Committee leading group
The Wonderful Dental Clinic

• 2010-2011 = 79 clients
• 2011-2012 = 122 + 43 clients
• 2012-2013 = 188 + 66 clients

• Unable to attend 100 - 2012-2013
• Failed to attend 73 - 2012-2013

• Upper mountains FTA has decreased post reconciliation involvement. However, Penrith area remains an issue for the service.
RECONCILIATION WEEK – June + Aug 2012
NADOC WEEK – OCT 2012

• Welcome to country, story circle and afternoon tea was held. Community health included on SWD NADOC celebrations

• Invitations offered to hospital staff for the local NADOC Ball -1 x Hospital staff attending 2012

• 3 x Hospital staff attending 2013
ANZAC DAY DISPLAY 2013+ READING OF NAMES
Health & Wellbeing Connections Community & Health Forum May 2013– the dancers
Renaming of Women's & Children's Services - 'KOORANA' - bring forth the young
“Moving On” Group 2013 - 4 participants missing
Continuing to move forward....

- Maintaining the committee as people change positions within the organisation and the community
- Keeping the energy flowing during high work levels and community issues
- Sustaining what we have already achieved
- Looking to the future and what we need to work on – Reconciliation Garden, future forums, child playground, linking to aged care services, further enhancing dental services
- What new needs are being identified – are we seeing them?