



## NSW Health Aboriginal Workforce Newsletter ISSUE 3, 2012



(l to r) Shireen Malamoo, Justice Health & Forensic Mental Health Aboriginal Board Member, Jeff McMullen, Facilitator, Dr Ngiare Brown, Facilitator, Joy Smith, Presenter, Maureen O'Donnell, Far West NSW Local Health District Aboriginal Board Member, Dr Mary Foley, Director-General and Charles Davison, Manager, Aboriginal Workforce



above: Jeff McMullen interviewing Joy Smith about personal experiences with the NSW and Queensland health systems as an Aboriginal woman.



left: Dr Mary Foley, Director General, NSW Health addressing the workshop

## Lead the Change: An Executive Challenge Planning Workshop

Lead the Change: an Executive Challenge Workshop hosted by Dr Mary Foley, Director General, NSW Health was held on Wednesday 2nd May 2012 at the National Centre for Indigenous Excellence, Redfern. The workshop for all NSW Health Senior Executives included Chief Executives, Chairs and Aboriginal representatives of Governing Boards of Local Health Districts, and Senior Executive of the Ministry of Health was facilitated by Mr Jeff McMullen (journalist) and Dr Ngiare Brown. All attendees provided valuable feedback and input throughout the day.

The workshop focused on how the NSW Ministry of Health, Local Health Districts,

Networks and other public health organisations will implement *Respecting the Difference*, An Aboriginal Cultural Training Framework for NSW Health (the Framework). Respecting the Difference is mandatory training for all NSW Health staff and is designed to give staff the necessary knowledge and skills to interact positively with Aboriginal people and communities to improve health care.

Understanding the disparities in health status and outcomes experienced by Aboriginal people is essential for creating positive change. Changing the platform of service delivery requires engagement and participation through knowledge acquisition and education.

The training is delivered in two components:

- eLearning program which went "live" on 16th March 2012 on the NSW Health Online Learning Centre: <http://nswhealth.moodle.com.au>. This is a 2 hour online and blended learning program that allows for the greatest number of staff to access consistent training and information. A set of web-based resources will increase participation and access to information across NSW. Topics in this training include: history and culture; identity; Aboriginal health; communication; and existing barriers for access to health services; and

*continued on page 4*



Health



good health—great jobs

Welcome to the third edition of *Good Health Great Jobs*, the NSW Health Aboriginal Workforce quarterly newsletter.

The newsletter keeps NSW Health staff up to date with Aboriginal health workforce issues and the progress of implementation of the *Good Health - Great Jobs*, NSW Health Aboriginal Workforce Strategic Framework 2011 – 2015.

If you have any story ideas or suggestions, please email them to [Charles Davison, Manager, Aboriginal Workforce](mailto:Charles.Davison@nsw.gov.au).

A regular feature of this newsletter is 'Get to know...' a column where we profile an Aboriginal health staff member.

Our 'Get to know...' staff member this issue is Helen Orcher, Aboriginal Employment Coordinator with South Western Sydney Local Health District and recently elected Chair of the State-wide Managers of Aboriginal Workforce Development Network.

**Helen Orcher, Aboriginal Employment Coordinator with South Western Sydney Local Health District.**

**What is the best thing about your job?**

The best thing about my job is working with Aboriginal people and communities. Every day there is always something new to deal with and a new challenge.

**The three most important skills or attributes I bring to my job are...**

- Knowing my culture and Aboriginal communities
- Advocating for Aboriginal people and making a positive change to their lives
- Training and networking with people

**Who are five people who have inspired you most?**

Mum & dad, grandson, son and daughter

**A book that means a lot to me is...**

Scooby Doo greatest adventure...I read it at least 3 times per week

**A movie that has stayed with me is...**

Legends of the Fall

**The best piece of advice I've been given and from whom is...**

My boss always says to stay positive and strong and keep doing the right things and eventually things will change.

**I like to sing along to...**

Let me be there

**If I could go anywhere in the world it would be to... and the three things I would take are...**

I would go to America and the 3 things I would take with me would be my grandson, son and daughter they are the most important.



## South Western Sydney became the first District to launch the Respecting the Difference Framework

– designed to improve staff knowledge and understanding of the culture, customs, heritage and protocols in Aboriginal communities.

District Chief Executive Amanda Larkin said Respecting the Difference was not simply about education, it was about a cultural change.

"We need to reassess our values, opinions and behaviour towards our Aboriginal staff, patients, families and carers.

"We want Aboriginal people to want to

come and work with us and to feel safe in seeking treatment at our facilities," she said.

Amanda Larkin and local Aboriginal Elder Uncle Ivan Wellington signed a statement outlining the District's commitment to providing respectful, responsive and culturally sensitive services and to improving staff knowledge and understanding of Aboriginal culture.

The statement will hang alongside the framed Respecting the Difference artwork in the foyer of the District's Hospitals, community health centres and mental health units.

below: Amanda Larkin, South Western Sydney LHD Chief Executive and Uncle Ivan Wellington unveil the artwork which will hang in the District's facilities





## News in Brief

**University of Wollongong 2012 Health and Behavioural Sciences Careers Fair.** The Aboriginal Workforce Unit (Tracey Flanagan and Aboriginal Allied Health Social Work Cadet, Tracy Jackson) represented NSW Health at the Careers Fair held on 30th May 2012 at the University. There are over 2500 students enrolled in the Health and Behavioural Students Faculty at the University of Wollongong (UOW). Tracy Jackson was able to provide students with firsthand experience having studied her undergraduate psychology degree at UOW whilst completing her cadetship work placements with the Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health District.



above: Tracy Jackson at the UOW Health and Behavioural Science Careers Fair

### Recruitment to State-wide Mental Health and Drug & Alcohol Clinical Positions

The Closing the Gap National Partnership Agreement (NPA) Indigenous Early Childhood Development (IECD) Element 2 (NPA IECD E2) initiative has been established to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal pregnant women in the perinatal period, their children, partners and families who are 'at risk' or vulnerable to mental health and/or drug and alcohol issues.

There are currently 13 AMIHS sites in remote, regional and urban NSW who partner with nine LHD mental health and drug and alcohol Directorates.

The aims of this state-wide initiative / partnership are:

- To increase access and improve identification and early intervention for Aboriginal pregnant women and their families who are 'at risk' or vulnerable to mental health and/or drug and alcohol issues

- To strengthen the structures, procedures and processes that support best practice and effective continuum of care between community antenatal care providers, hospitals and back to the community providers following birth

This is an exciting opportunity to be part of an innovative service supporting Aboriginal pregnant women, their children and families.

These positions will be co located at and work in close partnership with their local Aboriginal Maternal and Infant Health Service (AMIHS) by:

- Providing prevention and early intervention mental health and/or drug and alcohol services
- Engaging with the local Aboriginal community
- Developing clinical, referral and cultural pathways
- Linking in with a range of local specialist and general health services.

Vacancies for mental health clinicians and drug and alcohol clinicians exist in the following locations:

*Hunter New England LHD* – Taree: 1 Mental Health Clinician

*Western NSW LHD* – Walgett: 1 Mental Health Clinician and 1 Drug & Alcohol Clinician

*Mid North Coast LHD* – Coffs Harbour: 1 Mental Health Clinician

*Western Sydney LHD* – Mt Druitt: 1 Mental Health Clinician

*Central Coast LHD* – Gosford: 1 Drug & Alcohol Clinician (Internal to Health Staff across NSW only)

Pending a positive evaluation of the NPA IECD E2 MHDAS Project we would support ongoing funding for this project with a view to increasing services state-wide.

For further details please contact the NPA IECD Element 2 mental health drug and alcohol service Project Officers for further information:

Danielle Perkes, NPA IECD E2 Mental Health Project Officer on 02 9816 0352; or

Gay Foster, NPA IECD E2 Drug & Alcohol Project Officer on 02 9816 0472

### Centre for Rural and Remote Education – Aboriginal Cultural Education Program

The Centre for Rural and Remote Education (CRRE) which provides learning and development programs and services for the Far West and Western NSW Local Health Districts (LHD) has recently appointed Andrew Johnson as Consultant Aboriginal Cultural Education Program for 12 months. Andrew has had to hit the ground running, working on the cultural education program for the CRRE, with assisting the planning of the implementation of the State online component as well as starting the development of the face to face components.

Working closely with Donna K Cruickshank (Coordinator Aboriginal Workforce Enhancement) and Vicky Scott (A/Manager CRRE), Andrew has developed a framework for the fully blended program (working title – *Taking the Time to Understand*) and drafted generic district information that will be utilised. The program development will be overseen by key stakeholders across the districts, especially our Aboriginal communities. The Western NSW LHD Working Party has been established with Executive Sponsorship from the Chief Executive and Director CRRE. An initial meeting with Far West LHD representatives will be held to discuss requirements for the district. The program framework has been split into components to ensure a smooth and successful implementation for sustainability as follows:

Component 1 – "Respecting the Difference" e-Learning program

Component 2 – Facilitation model

Component 3 – Generic and role specific content

Component 4 – Local cultural content

Component 5 – Training program locations

Component 6 – Monitoring and evaluation



# REAL STORIES

## what's happening in the NSW Health Workplace

### 2013 NSW Rural Resident Medical Officer Cadetship for Aboriginal Medical Students

NSW Rural Doctors Network (RDN) on behalf of the NSW Ministry of Health, is offering up to three cadetships to Aboriginal medical students interested in undertaking a medical career in NSW.

**About the cadetships:** successful applicants receive a scholarship of \$30,000 during their degree. In return, they agree to work for two years in a rural NSW Base Hospital within the first triennium following graduation.

Cadets in their final year of study apply for a PGY1 position through the Rural Preferential Recruitment (RPR) process administered by the Health Education and Training Institute (HETI).

Each Cadet is eligible for a relocation allowance to assist with costs associated with their move to the country.

Rural service can be undertaken in major NSW Base Hospitals including Wagga Wagga, Orange, Dubbo, Tamworth and Albury. Queries about locations for rural service should be directed to RDN.



For more information go to [2013 NSW Rural Resident Medical Officer Cadetship for Aboriginal Medical Students](#)



PSOs Darren Lester (left) and Wayne Miller (right)

### Three new Aboriginal Peer Support Officers Appointed at Ambulance Service of NSW

The Peer Support Officers (PSOs) are trained to provide practical support and to defuse strong emotional reactions experienced by their colleagues, in response to traumatic incidents that have the potential to emotionally affect them. The peer support program is designed to represent the Ambulance Service's whole workforce and to meet the varied needs of individual employees.

Three new Aboriginal PSOs were welcomed to the team following completing their 2 day training in May 2012. They are: Paramedic Darren Lester (Mascot), and Paramedic interns Wayne Miller (St Ives) and Tim Meehan (Coonabarabran). They were selected through a targeted recruitment process, which is the first in the provision of staff support services for the role of Aboriginal PSOs. This enables the delivery of culturally appropriate peer support to Aboriginal staff in need and complements other Ambulance activities aimed at 'closing the gap' for Aboriginal people in NSW.



above: PSO Wayne Miller

continued from page 1

- Face-to-face workshop (6 hours) which includes generic subjects to support and complement the online training, as well as local content (adapted for individual Local Health District, Network and other public health organisation requirements and demographics), with specific information particular to local Aboriginal communities. It is recommended that both training components be completed within 6 months of each other (at the maximum).

The Framework is a key strategy identified in *Good Health – Great Jobs*, NSW Health Aboriginal Workforce Strategic Framework 2011 – 2015. For further information on *Respecting the Difference or Good Health – Great Jobs* please refer to the following links:

[Good Health - Great Jobs, NSW Health Aboriginal Workforce Strategic Framework 2011 - 2015](#)

[Respecting the Difference, An Aboriginal Cultural Training Framework for NSW Health](#)

For information on all NSW Health Aboriginal Workforce policies, programs and publications please go to: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/workforce/aboriginal/index.asp>

This is a publication of Aboriginal Workforce, Workforce Development Branch, NSW Ministry of Health, September 2012.



Health