



NSW Health Aboriginal Workforce Newsletter ISSUE 4, 2014



Clockwise above: Paramedic Liam Harte and children at the Ambulance NSW NAIDOC event 2013; Paramedic Nathaniel Smith and children at the Ambulance NSW NAIDOC event 2013; Paramedic Nathaniel Smith helps colour-in; and Entries from Colouring-in Competition.

NSW Ambulance NAIDOC 2013

The first full week every year in July marks NAIDOC Week celebrations across Australia and on Friday 12 July 2013 the National Centre for Indigenous Excellence in Redfern held its NAIDOC Day.

The NAIDOC Family and Sports Day is the signature event for NAIDOC celebrations in Inner City Sydney and has been running in the local area for over 20 years. The event included performances by local artists, kid's rides, arts and craft and cultural activities, face painting and a free BBQ.

Dean Pennell from the Cardiac Care team, Nathaniel Smith from St Ives and Liam Harte from Sydney Ambulance Centre attended with an ambulance full of information, activities and a fiercely held colouring-in competition for kids.

This day provided Ambulance NSW an invaluable opportunity to engage with the community outside of the workplace setting.

NAIDOC stands for National Aborigines and Islanders Day Observance Committee. Its origins can be traced to the emergence of Aboriginal groups in the 1920s which sought to increase awareness in the wider community to improve the status and treatment of Indigenous Australians. NAIDOC Week is a celebration of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and an opportunity to recognise the contributions of Indigenous Australians in various fields.

Article by: Paramedic Liam Harte, Sydney Ambulance Centre, Ambulance NSW.

Welcome!

... to the 4th Issue of the Good Health – Great Jobs Newsletter is back.

There has been an enormous amount of activity both at the State and Local level and we hope you enjoy reading about the variety of work being undertaken.



Health

About the NSW Training Awards

- The NSW Training Awards are held annually by the NSW Department of Education and Communities (DEC) to recognise outstanding achievement in the vocational education and training sector.
- The Awards honour and reward the achievements of students, trainers/teachers, training organisations, large and small employers.
- Ms Palmans was nominated by Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital Human Resources Department and Director Aboriginal Health for her exceptional work and commitment during her traineeship at Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital.
- On 20 June 2013, SWSLHD Aboriginal Trainee Robyn Palmans, was awarded the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Student of the Year Award at the 2013 Southern Sydney Region Training Awards.
- Ms Palmans will now be considered for a NSW Training Award from State Training Services.



good health-great jobs

Get to know....



SWSLHD's Robyn Palmans latest achievement...

What is your role at Bankstown-Lidcombe Hospital?

I'm a Admin Ward Clerk on Ward 2A—Rehabilitation.

How long have you worked at BLH?

I started in February 2012 as an Aboriginal Trainee and worked as a Ward Clerk on the Birthing Unit for my first 13 months here. I was recently offered a full-time position on 2A.

What is your favourite thing about BLH?

There are lots of things I love about Bankstown Hospital, the supportive environment, the staff and I really love my job. Working in a hospital is very different to working in any other type of customer service role! I also really enjoy that the hospital supports Indigenous staff being involved in events throughout the year.

If you received a \$100,000 donation for the hospital, what would you spend it on?

Oh, lots of things! But the three main areas would be the children's ward, aged care and rehabilitation and eye conditions.

Could you tell me a bit about your latest achievement?

I was awarded South Western Sydney Region Aboriginal Trainee of the Year. I was shocked and over the moon to be nominated by Scott McGrath (HR Manager). For me it wasn't about winning at all but about the recognition—about being recognised for doing a great job. Once the nomination was placed, they were reviewed and a short list of nominees were interviewed by a panel. I was so nervous—sweaty palms and shaky. It was just like a job interview! After the interview I was sent a letter inviting me to attend the Awards Night at Club Menai. It was a very formal affair, everyone was dressed up and they put on a lovely 3 course meal. I really enjoyed being able to invite my family and some of my colleagues. First, they announced all the finalists and we all received our certificates and a cheque.

When they announced the winner, I almost fell off my chair I was so shocked.

I hadn't expected to win! They awarded me with NSW Aboriginal Trainee of the Year and I was given more certificates and another cheque! They've both gone into savings for a holiday! As a regional winner, I'll be considered for the NSW Aboriginal Trainee of the Year.

What has been the highlight of your job?

My highlight would have to be when I was offered a full-time position after completing the Traineeship. Also, completing my Certificate 2 in Health Administration.

Could you tell us a bit about the Aboriginal Traineeship program?

I really enjoyed the traineeship. It was hard at times but I felt I got so much support from the staff, particularly Scott [McGrath]. There were some hiccoughs but I think that was just because we were the first group to do this program. It was great to work with and develop a support network with the other trainees. We helped each other through our TAFE work and through problems we had at work. I still feel very supported by those that I work with. I even found that I learnt things in the traineeship I could take home and apply there!

What's your favourite thing to do on your day off?

I love spending time with my family.

Above: Robyn Palmans with her certificate



Thanks for sharing with us Robyn and congratulations on your achievement!



News in Brief

NSW Health Aboriginal Health Worker Project Update

Aboriginal Workforce Survey 2012

The survey was conducted across the state and gathered information regarding Aboriginal employment across NSW HealthKey information from the report is outlined below:

- 75% of respondents were female.
- Only 53% of respondents have undergone a performance review in the past 12 months.
- 51% of respondents would like a mentor.
- While 72% of Aboriginal Health Workers think there should be a minimum qualification in Primary Health Care, only 23.7% have completed a Certificate IV in Aboriginal Primary Health Care.
- 55.6% of respondents are in targeted or identified Aboriginal positions, a 9.6% increase since 2008.
- 22% of respondents travel between 40 and 60km to work, 46% of respondents travel between 20 and 40km to work, 20% travel between 15 and 20km to work.
- Those who completed post-secondary qualifications earn \$12,244 more on average per year.



<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/publications/Publications/aboriginal-health-workforce-survey-2012.pdf>

National activities

Practitioner Registration

1 July 2012 saw the commencement of Aboriginal Health Practitioner registrations through the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practice Board of Australia (ATSIHPBA) which is a division of Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA). Aboriginal Health Practitioner is a protected title by law. ATSIHPBA discusses the function of Practitioner

registration and Practitioner registration rates in their monthly Communiqués. Communiqués can be accessed through ATSIHPBA's website at: <http://www.atsihealthpracticeboard.gov.au/News/Communiqués.aspx>

Qualification review

An outcome of the Health Workforce Australia (HWA) "Growing our Future Final report of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker project" published in December 2011. <https://www.hwa.gov.au/sites/uploads/a-tsi-hwa-final-report-201208.pdf>, was the 12 month HWA project to review the national Aboriginal health worker qualifications.

HWA funded the Community Services and Health Industry Skills Council (CS&HISC) to review and update the health training package competency standards and qualifications. CS&HISC undertook a detailed review of the qualification over the last 12 months which involved all Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal representatives from state and territory health services, training providers, and clinical, non-clinical and workforce areas. More details on HWAs activities can be found at: <http://www.hwa.gov.au/work-programs/workforce-innovation-and-reform/atsihw/primary-healthcare-training-package>

The Health Training Package HLT07 has been approved and details on the revised qualifications, implementation and assessment processes can be found at: http://www.cshisc.com.au/develop/training-packages/?cm_mid=2589441&cm_crmid={38cf6a1d-429b-e211-b979-005056920608}&cm_medium=email

NSW Update

Aboriginal Health Worker project

Since the workshop in Coogee in 2012 a substantial amount of work has occurred at the national level which has influenced

the program. As a result the Ministry has worked on the development of a *Decision Making Framework for Aboriginal Health Workers undertaking clinical activities in NSW Health* (link below) and the associated *Guidelines for Aboriginal Health Workers in NSW Health* (in the final review phase prior to publication).

These documents will perform a vital role in supporting the development of our skilled, qualified and competent workforce, working in a safe and appropriately supervised work environment.



<http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/workforce/aboriginal/Publications/decision-making-framework.pdf>

Aboriginal Health Worker Up-skill Project

Under the umbrella of the Strategic Skills Program funded by the Department of Education and Communities, NSW Health is working with the Aboriginal Health College to support the training of Aboriginal Health Workers in Cert III and Cert IV Aboriginal and / or Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care (community care).

At the time of publication thirteen Aboriginal Health Workers were enrolled with the Aboriginal Health College, with the goal to gain their qualification in Aboriginal Primary Health Care by the end of the 2013-2014 financial year.

Aboriginal Workforce Unit is working with Local coordinators to ensure as much local support as possible is provided to the enrollees regarding study leave, workplace mentoring / tutoring.



Helping to close the gap

In 2012, HealthShare appointed Lana Shaw as Manager, Aboriginal Workforce Development, to implement NSW Health's *Respecting the Difference* Aboriginal Cultural Training Framework policy and to increase employment and training opportunities within HealthShare for Aboriginal people.

The Aboriginal Cultural Training Framework sets out the cultural training required for HealthShare to build a workplace in which Aboriginal culture is valued and respected.

Through this training, staff will be provided with the necessary knowledge and skills to interact positively with Aboriginal people and communities, and improve engagement and communication methods to enhance work practices and employment opportunities.

Increasing appreciation, understanding and knowledge of Aboriginal culture, customs, heritage and protocols is regarded as of paramount importance in ensuring improved Aboriginal health outcomes.

The *Respecting the Difference* training is mandatory for all HealthShare employees. The first session was held on 2 August 2012 for Executives and senior managers, and sessions for all employees commenced rollout from September 2012.

Currently, there are 106 Aboriginal staff within HealthShare, three quarters of whom work in Food, Hotel and Linen Services. Lana has been tasked with increasing this number through developing graduate recruitment and training opportunities targeting Aboriginal school leavers and communities.

Lana is descended from the Gumbaynggirr tribe of Bowraville in northern NSW. Lana came to HealthShare with a wealth of experience, having worked for the NSW government for 15 years. She has worked with Aboriginal communities and peak Aboriginal community-based organisations across NSW.

"My position in HealthShare provides an opportunity to support the recognition of Aboriginal people's career aspirations by creating employment and training opportunities, as I believe these are the key areas towards 'Closing the Gap,'" Lana explains.

"The work we have to do is crucially important and I am inspired by the thought of working to help ensure the people in HealthShare all do our best to contribute to Closing the Gap.

"The NSW Health Code of Conduct sets the standards of ethical and professional conduct for all HealthShare staff and outlines our responsibilities that racism within the workplace won't be tolerated," she adds.

Aboriginal Workforce Development Manager, Lana Shaw, will implement NSW Health's *Respecting the Difference* Aboriginal Cultural Training Framework policy in HealthShare.

Aboriginal Workforce

Aboriginal Workforce Unit - Website



The Aboriginal Workforce Unit has a new website. As documents are updated they will be added to the site. However, you can already find the core documents which drive the work of the unit and information about the activities which are being undertaken. We hope you will find the website useful to your work. AWU wants to thank our outgoing Graduate Health Management Program trainee, Jamie Boyce, for all the hard work he contributed to transitioning the AWU information from the old website to the new website. It was an exercise Jamie undertook with professionalism and heart. The web-link is: <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/workforce/aboriginal/Pages/default.aspx>

Aboriginal Workforce – Recruitment and Retention Resource

In 2013 the NSW Ministry of Health commenced a project to scope the development of a NSW Health Aboriginal Recruitment and Retention Resource to assist managers, HR staff and Aboriginal people applying for roles. The aim of the resource being to: provide clear, culturally sensitive information that supports effective recruitment and retention approaches for Aboriginal people; provide information about good practice, together with some useful tools including examples, forms and templates.

As a result of the consultation process, a Discussion Paper was developed identifying a range of issues and objectives to be addressed by the resource. It also posed some significant questions for consideration during the Scoping Workshop held on 9 July 2013 which was well attended and appraised.

The workshop resulted in a broad depth of thoughts and ideas and highlighted some key findings around system challenges for Aboriginal recruitment and retention. The Ministry will work to commence resource development in 2014 with implementation across the state to follow.

Aboriginal Health Worker Forum

The Aboriginal Health Worker Forum election processes for the 2013 – 2014 period for the elected Representatives and Proxies were uniquely established for one year. This was to enable as much support to be given to the Aboriginal Health Worker project activities as possible. The election originally scheduled for January 2014 has been deferred in consultation. Aboriginal Health Worker Forum Representatives and Proxies are requested to maintain their current roles and responsibilities to the Forum until the 2014 election is conducted, expected to be April / May 2014. Chief Executives have been apprised of the deferment. Aboriginal Health Workers who are elected in 2014 will be undertaking their roles for a two year period.

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