On Friday the 31st of July, Maari Ma Health held a White Ribbon Night at the Napredak Club. Approximately 70 people attended the event which was held to raise awareness about domestic violence in the community, and what we as individuals and as an organisation can do to help. Currently, one woman every week is losing their life due to domestic violence and it is nearly always at the hands of someone who she has had a close relationship with such as a current partner or ex-partner.

White Ribbon is Australia’s only national, male led campaign to end men’s violence against women. Their vision is that all women live in safety free from all forms of men’s violence whether it be physical or emotional. Women’s safety is a man’s issue too and White Ribbon aims to educate our communities through programs in schools and in the workplace.

Maari Ma was very lucky to have special guest, Gary Ella, a former Rugby Union player and now White Ribbon Ambassador, join us at our event. Gary spoke about his early life and what it was like growing up on a mission in La Perouse which is close to the CBD of Sydney. He was one of twelve children and was fortunate enough to have some great sporting opportunities which led him to represent Australia in Rugby Union. Gary then went on to coaching. His passion for family led him to become a White Ribbon Ambassador. White Ribbon Ambassadors are men who recognise the importance of men taking responsibility and playing a leadership role in preventing men’s violence against women.

Our White Ribbon raffle was also drawn on the night by Gary, and Gayle Bennetts was the winner of a framed and signed guernsey from State of Origin Rugby League. We raised approximately $1,100 which will go to the White Ribbon Foundation.

A big thank you to all staff who were involved in the event, the Kickett Brothers for the entertainment, Gary Ella for joining us and all of the community members who attended!
NAIDOC
a celebration in the park

NAIDOC week was held last month from the 5th—12th of July. On Thursday the 9th of July, community organisations gathered in Sturt Park for the NAIDOC Family Fun Day. What started out to be a mild day in Broken Hill, turned into a very, very cold day. Despite the weather, there was a fantastic turn out, particularly at our Maari Ma stall.

We had plenty of resources to give away to the community as well as yummy fruit kebabs and smoothies made by our smoothie bike. The fruit kebabs and the smoothie bike were so popular that we ran out of ingredients before the day was over! We had an area set up for kids to play with play-doh and to read books, and our mobile clinic was parked on site for people to have a walk through.

Maari Ma would like to thank everyone who was involved in the Family Fun Day. It was a great day!

What’s On?

National Dental Week
3rd—9th August

World Breastfeeding Week
1st—7th August

Healthy Start Playgroup
10:30am to 1:00 pm
Fridays at the TAFE playhouse in Argent St
(Not on during school holidays)

After school cooking group
3:15 pm to 4:30 pm
Wednesdays and Thursdays in the community kitchen at the Primary Health Care Service
(Not on during school holidays)

Cooking group for Parents
10:30 am to 12:30pm
Thursdays (before Playgroup) in the community kitchen at the Primary Health Care Service
(Not on during school holidays)

Disabled Car Park

There is now a dedicated disabled park at the front of the Maari Ma Primary Health Care Service. The car park is conveniently located next to the disabled ramp.
Hello Lead Ted!

Lead Ted popped in to Maari Ma’s Healthy Start Playgroup to say Hello and talk about how lead affects children’s health.

_In Broken Hill, lead is in the ground - it can make our kids sick._

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**How does lead affect children’s health?**

Lead can enter our bodies by inhalation or ingestion. It can affect almost every organ and system in the body.

As lead poisoning often occurs without obvious symptoms, it can go unrecognized. Lead exposure in childhood can cause behaviour and attention problems, learning and thinking difficulties. It may also affect physical growth, cause low iron in the blood and affect the functioning of the kidneys. Lead ingested by pregnant women can pass through the placenta and affect babies.

**Lead poisoning is preventable.**

**Behaviour to reduce potential lead exposure:**

- Frequently wash children’s hands
- Regularly wash family pets and toys
- Regularly wash or wet-mop floors, stairs and window sills to reduce dust
- Have a sandpit

**Lead and Nutrition**

_Diet is important in keeping children’s lead levels low. The best diet is balanced and healthy._

- Wash your hands before you eat and wash all fruit and vegetables well before eating them.
- Children need to be given foods that are rich in iron everyday (meat, chicken, fish, wholegrain bread, baked beans, green vegetables, eggs, peanut butter).
- Iron rich foods should be given at the same meal as vitamin C rich foods (oranges, pineapple, strawberries, capsicum, tomato, cabbage, broccoli).
- A good intake of calcium (from milk, cheese, yoghurt) assists in lowering lead absorption.
- A diet high in fat increases lead absorption. Therefore it is necessary to limit fatty foods.
- Having regular healthy meals through the day helps to keep lead levels down.

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**I am a smoker, but I want to breastfeed my baby...**

Research has found that smokers are less likely to begin or persist with breastfeeding compared with non-smokers. It is a common belief that if mothers smoke it is safer to give their baby formula, however babies who are formula fed are more likely to suffer the effects of second-hand smoke compared to breastfed babies. This is because infant formula does not protect against illness like breast milk does.

**Harm minimisation if you are a smoker, but want to breastfeed your baby:**

1. _Smoke straight after a breastfeeding—Nicotine levels in your breast milk are halved in about 97 minutes after a cigarette. The longer between smoking and a breastfeeding, the less nicotine your baby will be exposed to through your breast milk._
2. _Don’t smoke in the house or the car—Keep the area around your baby as smoke-free as possible. Don’t allow anyone else to smoke near your baby._
3. _Cover up and clean up—Each time you have a cigarette, the smoke is trapped in your clothing, hair and skin. You won’t always be able to change your clothes, brush your teeth, shower or wash your hair after each cigarette. However, you could think about having a ‘smoking outfit’ or something to cover your clothes, which you keep outside to change into. Cover your hair with a shower cap or scarf. You can then wash your hands and brush your teeth when you take off the outer layer._
Celebrating 20 Years of MAARI MA HEALTH!

Maari Ma was established 20 years ago to address the health needs of Aboriginal people in the Far West. It is a community-controlled health organisation with a Board drawn from 7 communities spread out across almost 200,000 square kilometres. Maari Ma provides many services including health, social, community services and programs for around 3,500 Aboriginal people and their families. We have a lot to celebrate in our achievements helping Aboriginal people to close the gap.

Having operated out of an old pub, the historic ‘Silver King’, for the best part of 20 years, we are excited to finally be in a purpose-built, quality health care facility designed with the needs of our clients in mind.

Please join us for the official opening of the new Primary Health Care Service:

**place:** 439 Argent Street, Broken Hill

**date:** Friday the 25th of September

**time:** 10.30am

And then on the 26th of September, we are having a 20th Year Anniversary Ball, and we would very much like you to come and help us acknowledge our journey from a small organisation to one of the largest and most successful Aboriginal community controlled organisations in the Murdi Paaki region.
National Dental Week

National Dental Week takes place every year during the first week of August. Dental week is aimed at educating all Australians about the importance of maintaining good oral health.

During Dental Week Maari Ma travelled to Ivanhoe, Menindee and Wilcannia to provide dental information sessions and supply toothbrushes and toothpaste to members of the communities.

We also conducted dental education sessions at Bugdlie Preschool and Maari Ma Playgroup.

On Wednesday the 5th of August we invited the community to come and visit the Primary Health Care Service on Argent Street to collect some dental resources and information.

Some important dental facts for all families:

☐ We remind you that it is very important to have a regular dental check-up (at least once every 6 months) and to change your toothbrush every 3 months.

☐ We recommend you brush your teeth twice a day, especially at night.

☐ Avoid foods that are high in sugar or acidity. For example: sticky lollies and soft drinks. A diet high in sugar and soft drinks will increase your risk of dental decay.

☐ Drinking water is not only good for your health; it also protects your teeth from harmful bacteria.

☐ Wearing a Mouthguard when playing sport is essential to protect your teeth.

☐ Smoking affects your teeth and can lead to gum disease. If the gum disease is not controlled properly you may eventually lose your teeth.

☐ If you are experiencing sensitivity to cold or sweet things we recommend you make a dental appointment at your earliest convenience.

☐ If your teeth become sensitive to hot or you are experiencing pain please contact the Health Service as soon as possible.
Changes to After School Cooking Group

After school cooking group is held every Thursday during the school term in the community kitchen at the Maari Ma Primary Health Care Service. It is for children in Years 1-6 who would like to learn some basic cooking skills and how to use healthy ingredients to make yummy snacks or meals.

There has been a slight change to the time of the cooking group. It will now start at 3.30pm and finish at 4.30pm.

World Breastfeeding Week

World Breastfeeding Week is from the 1st—7th of August. The aim of this week is to promote exclusive breastfeeding for the first six months of life which provides many health benefits to your baby such as important nutrients and protection from deadly diseases.

The year’s theme relates to working women and breastfeeding. There have already been many actions at the workplace level around the world to set up breastfeeding or mother-friendly workplaces. As a community we need to encourage such actions and support mothers in any way possible in their choice to breastfeed their baby.

Staff Update

Last month we said goodbye to two of our nurses, Heather Curyer and Kristy Kelly. Heather had been with us for 7 years and spent some of that time managing our health service in Wilcannia. Kristy started with us last year and will be returning to the Broken Hill Heath Service.

Maari Ma would like to welcome two new dieticians into our Primary Care Specialist Services team. Hannah Pusey is from Melbourne and is a new graduate. Kalynda Powell joined us this month and is from Wollongong and is also a new graduate.

IPTAAS

If you have a referral from your doctor to see a specialist interstate or in another town you should organise your travel arrangements as soon as your appointment is made. Maari Ma Health can you help you with this. Please contact the Primary Health Care Service on 8082 9777 or the Regional Office on 8082 9888.
**Improving Aboriginal health and closing the gap**

Maari Ma Primary Health Care Service aims to provide culturally appropriate health services to Aboriginal people living in Broken Hill and surrounding communities.

We are governed by an all Aboriginal Board of Directors, who are deeply committed to providing an holistic approach to Aboriginal health that includes physical, emotional, spiritual, cultural and environmental dimensions.

Our health workers, doctors and nurses are committed to providing you with the highest quality care. If you ever feel that this has not been achieved, please contact the manager, Kendy Rogers, on 08 8082 9777 to discuss the matter.

**GP Review**

During the year you should see your doctor to see if your GPMP or medication needs to be changed. You may also need some tests.

**GPMP & Medication**

You will be looked after by our Keeping Well team and other specialists like our dieticians, podiatrists and eye specialists. The Keeping Well team and pharmacist will help you with your medications which could include a Home Medication Review and a Webster Pack.

**Follow up care**

Our health workers will visit you to talk about your health and see how you are going with your medications.

**START:** Your cycle of care starts with a twelve monthly CTG/IPP sign up. This includes an ATSI Health Check and followup by a health worker.

You should see your doctor regularly and develop a care plan to manage your health. This plan is called a GPMP.