What’s on in 2016?

Australia’s Healthy Weight Week will be held from the 15th of February until the 19th of February this year. Events are held throughout the week to raise awareness about how important it is to achieve and maintain a healthy weight and lifestyle. Please see page 3 of the newsletter for more information.

Thursday the 17th of March marks Close the Gap Day. Close the Gap is a campaign for Indigenous health equality. The campaign’s goal is to close the health and life expectancy gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and non-Indigenous Australians by 2030.

World No Tobacco Day is on the 31st of May every year. This day is about raising awareness of the effects of tobacco on smokers and their families. It also focuses on the benefits of quitting.

NAIDOC week is held in the first full week of July every year. It is a time to celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and an opportunity to recognise the contributions that Indigenous Australians make to our country and our society.

White Ribbon Night falls on the last Friday of July. Maari Ma Health is now a White Ribbon accredited organisation and it is our job to raise awareness about domestic violence in our community, and what we as individuals and as an organisation can do to help.

National Nutrition Week will be from the 16th of October until the 22nd of October this year. Each year a theme is set by Nutrition Australia to help teach us about healthy foods. Watch this space!

October is also Mental Health Month and a theme is chosen every year to help us talk more about our mental health and how we feel about life. Our Mental Health Team at Maari Ma hosts activities and provides information to the community to raise awareness about the importance of our mental health.

Children’s Week will be from the 22nd of October until the 30th of October this year. Children’s week celebrates the right of children to enjoy childhood. A number of activities for children and families will be held during this week.

Postnatal Depression and Anxiety Awareness week will be held from the 13th of November until the 19th of November this year. This is a good opportunity for us to catch up with families, parents and parents-to-be to discuss how they are feeling and let them know that is ok to feel sad or anxious sometimes. We provide support and information on how to cope, and who can help if you aren’t coping.

White Ribbon Day is on November the 25th. This day is also the International Day of the Elimination of Violence against Women. We ask you to join us in raising awareness about the issue of domestic violence.
Elder’s Birthdays

In this issue we have a special birthday wish for one of our Elders.

Happy Birthday to Verina Crawford who turned 52 on the 5th of January.

Congratulations Verina, and best wishes from everyone at Maari Ma.

New Bubs!

Maari Ma would like to welcome one new bub into the community this month. Congratulations to Amy Thompson and Shane Hayward on the safe arrival of beautiful baby girl Summer Louise. Summer was born on the 12th of January at 3:23pm, weighing in at 3270 grams and with a length of 50cm.

Shane has been a Finance Officer at Maari Ma for over 5 years and he has been enjoying some time off with Amy and their bub, Summer. As you can see from the photos, they are both completely smitten with her. The staff at the Regional Office were also lucky enough to have a cuddle with baby Summer recently.

We would like to wish Amy and Shane all the best.

Valentine’s Day

The 14th of February marks Valentine’s Day. It is a day of romance that should be celebrated with your loved one, or even if you don’t have a partner, you could celebrate with a friend or family member. We often get too busy or distracted to remember to tell our loved ones that we love them, so make the effort to tell someone in your life that you love them this Valentine’s day!

“Love is life. All, everything that I understand, I understand only because I love. Everything is, everything exists, only because I love.”  
 Leo Tolstoy
**Work and Development Orders**

**Are you struggling to pay off fines?**

Unpaid fines can really hurt. They can result in increasing debt, loss of drivers licence and car registration, some of your wage being taken by the State Debt Recovery Office (SDRO) or property being taken by the Sheriff.

Fines debt can also impact on your health and wellbeing, your relationships and your ability to find employment. It can even lead to further offending and prison.

Now there is a simple solution on how to pay off your fines.

**How can Maari Ma Health help you?**

Maari Ma is proud to be an approved sponsor organisation in the Work and Development Order (WDO) Scheme.

WDOS allow you to clear your fines through volunteer work, counselling, educational courses or treatment programs. We can support you with your WDO application and we offer treatment programs (drug and alcohol, medical or mental health), case management and counselling at our Primary Health Care Service. We may also be able to support your application for an educational course, counselling or volunteer work with other services.

**How much of my debt can I pay off from a WDO?**

Fines are worked off at different rates depending on the activity. For example, volunteer work reduces the debt by $30 for every hour worked. A medical or mental health treatment plan, or drug and alcohol treatment, will reduce the debt by up to $1000 a month, as long as you comply with the plan set by our health professionals.

For more information please contact the Primary Health Care Service on 8082 9777 and ask for Fiona Burrows or Kendy Rogers.

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**Australia’s Healthy Weight Week**

Australia’s Healthy Weight Week is a great time to start thinking about healthier eating and lifestyle. Come and join us at Maari Ma for a week of fun-filled nutrition activities!

**Monday Feb 15th**

**HEALTHY SNACK BASKETS** with healthy snack options included for the whole family

**Tuesday Feb 16th**

**VEGETABLE BASKETS** packed with lovely fresh vegetables and recipe ideas

**Wednesday Feb 17th**

**MEASUREMENT CLINIC** from 9am-12pm where you can find out a healthy weight for you

**Thursday Feb 18th**

**SMOOTHIE BIKE** between 2pm-4:30pm where kids can jump on and pedal away to make a healthy fruit smoothie

**Friday Feb 19th**

**COMMUNITY BREAKFAST** from 9am—10am where you can choose healthy hot and cold breakfast options
Willyama ACES Day

On Monday the 14th of December, Willyama High School held their ACES day. This day is held every year in December and is organized by the Aboriginal Education Officers at the school. The day is about celebrating Aboriginal students who have had great attendance rates throughout the school year and those who have won awards or improved significantly during the year. The school supplied lunch, games and activities for the kids in the park next to the Aquatic Centre.

Regan Chesterfield, our Primary Health Nurse—Youth Health and Tarissa Staker, our Aboriginal Youth Health Worker were invited by Marli Kelly from Willyama High School to attend this event to talk to the students about youth health. Both Regan and Tarissa introduced the youth health program to the students, teachers and others who were present and explained why it is important to have a regular health check. Gift bags containing teenage-specific information were given to the students. A competition was also held for the first health check to be booked (and completed) in to the Youth Health Clinic at Maari Ma. The prize was a $30 gift voucher for Torpy’s and this was won by Robert Johnson who made sure he pushed his appointment forward to beat his brother! Well done Robert!

Approximately 25 students were present on the day and the Youth Health Team received positive feedback about their presentation and some students have already booked in for their health checks!

HIV Awareness Week

The Youth Health Team at Maari Ma held a BBQ at the Primary Health Care Service on Thursday the 3rd of December to raise awareness about HIV as part of HIV Awareness Week.

Approximately 50 community members and staff attended throughout the day. Regan and Tarissa provided community members with HIV information as well as Youth Health information plus giveaways. The feedback from the community was great and they especially loved the Johnny cakes made by Bilyara Bates and Jarred Menz.

Thank you to everyone who helped out on the day, especially Bilyara, Jarred and Shannon Edwards who were all involved in the cooking!
Australian Hearing

Australian Hearing visit our Primary Health Care Service regularly to perform hearing checks for our patients. They provide the following services:

- Hearing assessment
- Selecting and fitting hearing devices
- Regular hearing checks to monitor any changes in hearing levels
- Training to improve listening and communication skills
- Ongoing care and device repair services
- Home visits for those unable to travel to a clinic due to a medical condition (doctor’s certificate required).

Hearing clinics that have been confirmed for the first part of 2016 are as follows:

- **February** — Tuesday 23rd
- **March** — Monday 21st
- **April** — Monday 18th
- **May** — Monday 30th

For more information please talk to your GP at Marri Ma Health care or contact Australian Hearing Broken Hill on 8084 4200 or visit www.hearing.com.au

Healing Foundation Apology

The anniversary of the National Apology to the Stolen Generations is on February the 13th and the Healing Foundation are celebrating the strength and courage of our Stolen Generation heroes.

The Apology anniversary theme for 2016 is *Heal our Past, Build our Future, Celebrating our Heroes*. It highlights the importance of recognizing and sharing the experiences of Stolen Generations members and those in our communities who make a difference. Our Stolen Generations heroes and their experiences are unique to each region around Australia.

For more information check out the Healing Foundation’s website healingfoundation.org.au

HEAL OUR PAST
BUILD OUR FUTURE
APOLOGY 2016
CELEBRATING OUR HEROES

healingfoundation.org.au

Facebook: facebook.com/healingfoundation

Twitter: @HealingOurWay
Early Years

**Playgroup**

The Healthy Start Playgroup commenced on Friday the 5th of February, 10.30am to 1.00pm. Playgroup has moved from the TAFE building and will be at the Maari Ma Child and Family building (across the road from the Primary Health Care Service). Playgroup is for little kids (0 – 5 years) to talk, sing, read and play. A space is provided for parents to meet with other parents, for children to play and learn and to make friends. As part of the Little Kids and Books program, children receive a new book each fortnight.

*Please contact Lesley Harvey (Early Years Project Leader) on 8082 9888 if you are interested in attending or need transport.*

**Little kids & books**

Little Kids and Books in Menindee will start on Thursday the 11th of February at Menindee Children’s centre. Each fortnight (school terms) families can join in with their little kids - sharing a book (and taking it home), morning tea and songs.

*Contact Dimity Kelly at the Menindee Health Service on 8091 4209 for more information.*

Little Kids and Books in Wilcannia is part of the Playgroup with Save the Children at St Therese’s. Playgroup is held every Tuesday (school terms) and starts on Tuesday the 9th of February, 10.30am to 12.30pm.

*Contact Valerie Bugmy at Save the Children on 8091 5680 for more information.*

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Would you like to provide your child with the materials and support for a successful early school experience?

Did you know that a strong start at school can set your child up for life?

Joining HIPPY (Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters) costs nothing and creates a love of learning for you and your child.

**HIPPY is currently taking enrolments for four year olds.**

HIPPY can also provide an opportunity for paid employment at Maari Ma when your child is enrolled in the two year program. There are positions available to become a home tutor.

*For further information please contact Michelle Parker (HIPPY Coordinator) on 8082 9888.*
Maari Ma Staff Update

Maari Ma would like to farewell a few staff in this month’s newsletter. In December we said goodbye to Dr Elaine Powell and Matthew Jones. Dr Elaine worked with us for a few years and decided to move to Adelaide and will most likely spend some of the next year travelling. We would like to thank her for her contribution to the community.

We also farewelled Matthew Jones at the end of December. Matt was also with us for a few years and worked as a Primary Mental Health Alcohol & Other Drug Worker. He and his family have now moved to Bendigo. We wish him all the best for the future.

In January, Leah Daly, our Office Manager left us to move to Sydney with her family. Leah had been with us for nearly six years and provided a great amount of support to the Regional Office, Primary Health Care Service and also to the community. We will all miss her big smile.

Maari Ma would like to welcome a few new staff this month.

Aydan Simmons is our new part time Finance Officer. He will be helping out the Finance team while Kate Pittaway is on maternity leave. Aydan was previously working for Indigenous Business Australia (IBA) in Adelaide as a home loan officer and a business support officer.

Rahel Boon joined the Practice Administration team this month, along with Callan Rogers who was previously part of our Early Years team. Both Rahel and Callan are Practice Administration Assistants, with Rahel covering for Tamara Brache while she is on maternity leave.
Preventing and Managing Chronic Disease

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.

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

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

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.

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

Maari Ma Primary Health Care Service
"Improving Aboriginal health and closing the gap"

About MMPHCS
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.

Maari Ma : Winner of Far West Business Excellence Awards for our successful service to the Aboriginal communities of the Far West.