



Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation

Community Newsletter

# CLOSE THE GAP



Olympic champions Catherine Freeman and Ian Thorpe helped launch the Close the Gap campaign in April 2007.

Thursday the 19th 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 within a generation.

By being part of the campaign we can make sure that by 2030 any Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander child born in this country has the same opportunity as other Australian children to live a long, healthy and happy life.

Maari Ma Health will be hosting a community event in the Town Square in Argent St on the 19th March from 10am-2pm. We will have plenty of resources available and a healthy BBQ lunch will be provided. Maari Ma staff will be at the event conducting health checks.

**Come along, eat, have some fun and join us in raising awareness of the gap between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and the health of other Australians.**

## In this issue:

Elder's Birthdays	2
New Bubs!	2
Healthy Weight Week	3
Crossroads Program	3
The Early Years	4
Year 7 Orientation Day	5
Cardiology Clinic	6
Preventing & Managing Chronic Disease	7

### Maari Ma Primary Health Care Service

"Improving Aboriginal health and closing the gap"

**Broken Hill, NSW**



# Elder's Birthdays

In this issue we have special birthday wishes for three of our Elders.

Happy Birthday to **Michael Bates** who turned 57 on the 13th of March and to **Marilyn Brennan** who also turned 57 on the 18th of March.

**Valda Daykin** will turn 81 on the 26th of March. We hope you have a lovely birthday.

Congratulations **Michael, Marilyn** and **Valda**, and best wishes from everyone at Maari Ma.



Valda Daykin



Michael Bates



Marilyn Brennan

## What's On?

### CLOSE THE GAP DAY

**Thursday 19th March**  
**10:00am - 2:00pm**

At the Town Square in Argent St.

### 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 at the Child & Family Building at Maari Ma Health

(Not on during school holidays)

### Cooking group for Parents

**10:30 am to 12:30pm**

Thursdays (before Playgroup) at the Child & Family Building at Maari Ma Health

(Not on during school holidays)

# New Bubs



Baby Ariah-May

Maari Ma would like to welcome one new bub into the community.

Congratulations to **Toni Summers, Jay Charnock** and big sister **Avah Peters** on the safe arrival of their baby girl **Ariah-May Charnock**. Ariah-May was born on the 18th of February at 11:15pm, weighing in at 3760 grams and with a length of 52cm.

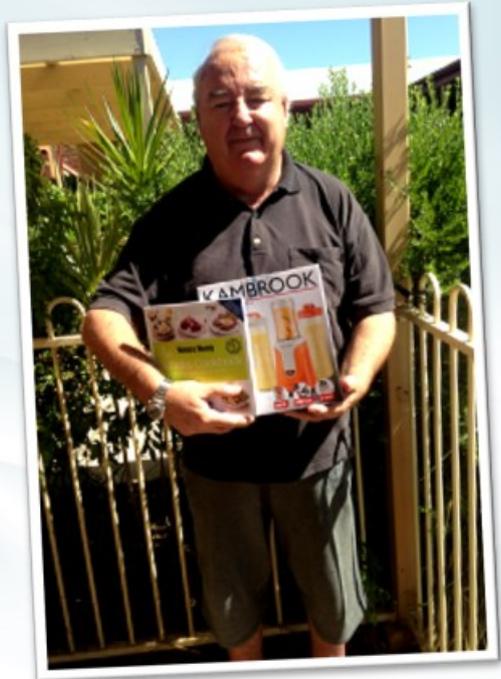
The family was given a gift bag from Maari Ma to congratulate them on their newest addition to the family.

Toni received antenatal care from Community Midwife, **Bryn Stables** and Aboriginal Health Practitioner, **Tarne Tester**. Toni and Ariah-May will continue to visit the health service for postnatal care.

We would like to wish Toni and her little family all the best.



# Healthy Weight Week



Roy Rivers

Maari Ma celebrated Healthy Weight Week in February. A free healthy breakfast was offered to our patients at the Primary Health Care Service on the 16th and 17th of February. Healthy cereals, fruit, yoghurt, veggie juices and smoothies from our new awesome smoothie bike were available.

A quiz produced by Dietitian, **Ashley Smith** was available for patients and staff to participate in during that week. The results showed that most people knew what foods were healthy and what kind of foods can lead to diseases such as diabetes.

A big congratulations goes to **Roy Rivers** for receiving 5 out of 5 on the quiz. Roy won a Kambrook Blitz2Go and a Diabetes Cookbook. Now he can make healthy smoothies for breakfast and learn about what foods are suitable for diabetics. Well done Roy!

## Crossroads Program at Copi Hollow

On Wednesday the 18th of February Healthy Lifestyle Worker, **Shannon Oates** presented nutrition and smoking information at the Crossroads Program to Year 11 and 12 students from Menindee, Wilcannia and Ivanhoe. Shannon opened the education session by using the blender (smoothie) bike pictured above and by showing the students how it worked. The students were then able to create their own smoothie using the bike.

Shannon gave the kids a brief introduction to nutrition and discussed:

- ✓ why it is important to eat healthy and,
- ✓ how it affects our self and well-being.

Shannon used a few different resources to demonstrate healthy foods vs unhealthy foods.

Shannon also talked to the kids about smoking and its effects on the human body. Our famous Smoking "Suzi" Doll was on display, as well as some lungs and tar products. Resources were also offered to the kids to take home.



# The Early Years

The Healthy Start Playgroup and cooking group are into their seventh week. We have been enjoying lots of water and ice play, learning about freezing and melting. The rice tray for drawing, filling and pouring has been popular as the children use math skills in their exploration.

Friday the 13th February marked the 7th Anniversary of the National Apology to Australia's Indigenous People. At Playgroup we acknowledged this day by wearing ribbons of red, yellow and black, painting a banner with hand prints, planting a kangaroo paw plant and with an acknowledgement read by **Callan Rogers** at group time followed by a minute of silence.



At the first Little Kids and Books in Menindee we read Hop a little, Jump a little. The program was attended by 7 parents and 11 children. This is a fun and interactive book, getting little bodies up and moving to a song.

We have three more books to explore before Easter and are inviting local families to come to Menindee's Children's Centre on Thursday the 26th March from 10.30am to 12 noon.



**Please contact Lesley Harvey (Early Years Project Leader) on 80829888 if you are interested in attending.**

# Year 7 Orientation Day

Each year, Year 7 students from both Broken Hill High School and Willyama High School attend the Year 7 Orientation Day run by the Youth Services Schools Interagency (YSSI). The aim of this event is to increase the awareness of challenges and issues that youth may experience in their first year of secondary school, and to introduce the kids to support services within the local community.

Recently, members of YSSI agency met with some local organisations in Broken Hill to explore areas where kids may need some help. These areas then became the focus of the orientation day and included:

- \* Resilience (being able to bounce back from hard times)
- \* Team work
- \* Friendship
- \* Positive attributes and/or strengths
- \* Bullying
- \* Social and emotional well-being/ good mental health
- \* Drug and alcohol use e.g. alcohol, cannabis, tobacco
- \* Physical health and well-being
- \* Empathy
- \* Citizenship
- \* Peer pressure
- \* Self-esteem and confidence
- \* Cultural identity



Maari Ma was represented by Social Worker, **Pia Brady** and Primary Mental Health & AOD Worker, **Jenny Walters**. Pia and Jenny chose to do an activity that focused on resilience and team work. The particular skills that were used on the day by the kids included negotiation, cooperation, positive social interaction, conflict resolution, reflection, problem solving and creativity.

The activity was a “construction challenge”. Students worked in teams to design and construct an object from everyday materials. Each team was asked to choose one of three objects to construct together (bridge, monster, plant).

Over 200 kids participated in the activity and we received feedback from 93 of them. Over half of the kids who responded rated the activity 5 out of 5! Most of the comments were that the activity was “fun” or “very fun”. We also got “awesome”, “cool” and “great”!

As you can see from the photos below, the kids did a great job working together to create a bridge, monster or a plant. Well done to all those that took part in the challenge!



# Cardiology Clinic

Cardiologists deal with disorders of the heart. They specialise in the diagnosis and treatment of congenital heart defects, coronary artery disease, heart failure and valvular heart disease.

Coronary heart disease is usually caused by a slow build up of fatty deposits on the inner wall of the blood vessels that supply the heart muscle with blood (the coronary arteries). These fatty deposits gradually clog the arteries and reduce the flow of blood to the heart. This process, called atherosclerosis, begins when people are young and can be well advanced by middle age.

There is no single cause for coronary heart disease, but there are 'risk factors' that increase your chance of developing it.

## There are 'modifiable' risk factors (ones that you can change), including:

- Smoking - both active smoking and being exposed to second-hand smoke
- High blood cholesterol
- High blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Physical inactivity
- Being overweight
- Depression, social isolation and a lack of social support



Unfortunately, there are also risk factors that you can't change, such as being male, increasing age and having a family history of coronary heart disease.

While some of these risk factors (such as age and gender) can't be changed, the good news is that there are many steps that you can take to reduce your risk of developing coronary heart disease. Such steps include:

- Quitting smoking
- Eating healthy (Dietitians can help you with this!) and
- Exercising regularly

At Maari Ma Health we have a visiting Cardiologist, **Dr. Patrick Groenestein**. Dr. Groenestein visits Broken Hill, Wilcannia and Menindee once every three months. If you have an appointment with Cardiologist, it is important that you attend. In the mean time you can access other services at Maari Ma to improve your health. We have Dietitians, a Diabetes Educator, a Smoking Cessation Officer as well as other specialists.

**For the last Cardiology clinic which was held in March, the attendance rate was 75%. If you have an appointment at Maari Ma, whether it is to see a doctor or a specialist, we encourage you to attend your appointment. If you are unable to attend your appointment please call us on 8082 9777 to reschedule.**

# 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 followup** by a health worker.

## Followup care

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

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

## 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**

Maari Ma's Cycle of Care

## 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.

### Regular services

Doctors  
Nurses  
Health workers  
Child health nurses  
Midwives  
Dietician  
Primary mental health workers  
Alcohol and other drug staff  
Psychologist  
Kids dentist  
Adult dentist  
Women's health  
Pharmacist

### Occasional services

Heart specialist  
Kidney specialist  
Diabetes specialist  
Child health specialist  
Eye specialist  
Alcohol specialist  
Smoking specialist  
Podiatry



**Kaylene Kemp**  
Manager:  
Community  
Engagement



**Kendy Rogers**  
Practice Manager:  
PHCS

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