

ABORIGINAL HEALTH PRACTITIONER REGISTRATION HIGH AT MAARI MA



Primary Health Worker, Jamie Billing, attends to a wound during a Dressings Clinic at the Broken Hill Primary Health Care Service. Jamie is one of 11 Maari Ma practitioners who are now registered.

One third of all registered Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Practitioners in New South Wales in December last year were Maari Ma employees. Mandatory national registration standards that practitioners must meet, no matter where they work in Australia, became effective in 2012. The standards set out requirements in a number of areas including continuing professional development, English language skills, professional indemnity insurance and recency of practice. Nationally in December 2013 there were 309 registered AHPs – 215 of

those were in the Northern Territory where registration was a requirement before the national standard came into effect. In NSW there were 26 registered AHPs and 9 were Maari Ma employees. Two more practitioners achieved registration in January this year with all remaining Maari Ma AHP's working towards their registration. Maari Ma CEO, Bob Davis, said the organisation is very proud of the high number of registered AHPs which reflects the organisation's commitment to a high standard of care and clinical practice.

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MAARI MA HEALTH
ABORIGINAL
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OVHS—AN INNOVATIVE MODEL OF CARE

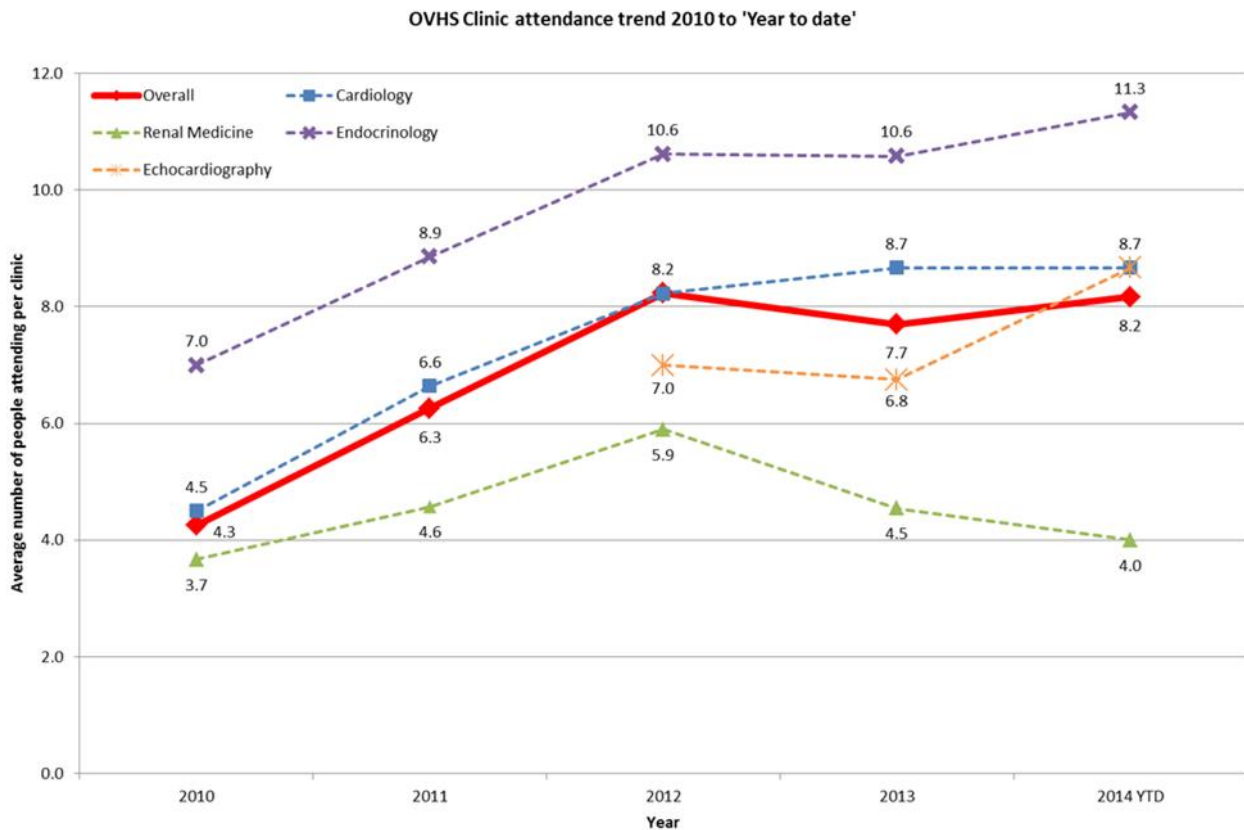
The Outback Vascular Health Service (OVHS) clinics have resumed for 2014 with all the visiting specialists in the program committing to their dates for another 12 months. Maari Ma clients are being provided with excellent continuity of care with the return of Cardiologist Dr Patrick Groenestein, Renal Physician Dr Paul Snelling, Echocardiographer Melinda Woods and the Endocrinology team of Prof Stephen Twigg, Associate Professor Marg McGill and Thyra Bolton.

Maari Ma attributes the success of the OVHS to the following:

- The service is provided at the local communities on a regular, ongoing quarterly schedule
- The specialists provide support to the local GPs so that they can provide ongoing care

- Maari Ma has developed institutional links with large metropolitan services rather than with individual providers

The OVHS is subject to regular reviews using the same quality improvement structure used throughout Maari Ma and at the end of every three months attendance data for all clinics is examined to determine where and if change needs to occur to improve attendance. Every 12 months Maari Ma meets with all specialists to find out where improvements can be made – this can be from changing flight and accommodation arrangements to investigating emerging research opportunities. Furthermore, in 2012 Maari Ma contracted the George Institute to do a single point evaluation of the OVHS. The evaluation took the form of client file audits and semi-structured interviews of specialists, management and clinicians.



Attendance at OVHS clinics is high. The chart shows the attendance for each clinic and overall (red line). With the exception of renal medicine all disciplines have seen increases in attendance over the period. OVHS is an innovative model of care that enhances patient outcomes. It provides local services to local people and is sustainable, as the provider is an institution rather than an individual. OVHS improves GP relationships with their clients by minimising external care providers and travel for appointments, making it a cost benefit service in terms of time away from home and family.

CLINICAL OUTREACH

Clinical outreach by Maari Ma's nutrition team has started the year with success with Dietitians, Sophie Nolan and Elisa Rossimel reporting their best trip to Ivanhoe to date. As well as providing one on one dietetics consults, the team has a strong focus on promoting diet and nutrition within schools. During their outreach trip to Ivanhoe in March, four health promotion and education sessions were held at Ivanhoe Central School, in the evening at the school Sophie and Elisa held an

adult education and cooking session and eight individual client consultations were conducted during their two day trip. Outreach clinics and school engagement occur throughout the year to Ivanhoe as well as to the communities of Menindee, Tibooburra, White Cliffs and Wilcannia. In Broken Hill, the nutrition team conducts weekly client consultation and school education, and provides weekly nutrition support at Broken Hill Playgroup and Cooking Group.



Students at Ivanhoe Central School were given different tasks to make healthy pita chips and guacamole dip as a healthy snack. At the end of the session the students were quizzed on the content covered and each received a Maari Ma cookbook on answering a question correctly.

WINNING DESIGN

Local artists were asked to provide Maari Ma with a meaningful piece of artwork to use in pamphlets and promotional material at the Primary Health Care Service. Congratulations to Clinton Kemp who submitted his artwork titled "Keeping Our Mob Informed". His artwork represents the services that Maari Ma offers to local and surrounding communities and the design will be used to promote health programs, particularly chronic disease programs. Similarly, a child art competition will be open to the community with the winning artwork to be used for child health programs and Healthy Start.



NATIONAL CLOSE THE GAP DAY

RAISING COMMUNITY AWARENESS



Newly appointed HIPPPY (Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters) Co-ordinator, Geraldine Tremelling was one of a number of Maari Ma staff interviewed on local radio to raise awareness of Maari Ma programs and closing the gap. Maari Ma thanks radio station 2BH/ Hill FM for their support.

Maari Ma staff joined with other Broken Hill organisations on March 20th - National Close the Gap Day - in the Town Square to raise awareness of the health inequity between Aboriginal and non Aboriginal Australians. Staff promoted programs and services during an outside broadcast by local radio station 2BH/ Hill FM and conducted carbon monoxide screening for smokers and family members of smokers as well as health checks such as blood pressure and blood glucose level checks. They handed out free dental resources, information and other health giveaways, and conducted a healthy BBQ.

"We are pleased at Maari Ma with the inroads we are making to reduce Indigenous disadvantage with programs such as our chronic disease strategy, our Healthy Start program, embedding literacy into the early years and targeting smoking which is the biggest barrier to improving Aboriginal health"
Maari Ma CEO, Bob Davis.



Community members (above) enjoyed a healthy BBQ in the Town Square. Other CTG activities were held during the week with children including activities at the Primary Health Care Service, Bugdlie Pre School in Broken Hill, Menindee Central School and at Wings in Wilcannia.



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