

## NEW PRIMARY HEALTH CARE BUILDING



A bird's eye view of Maari Ma's new Primary Health Care Service in Argent Street, Broken Hill. The Project Managers were Burns Aldis and the builders were CPM Building Contractors, based in Mildura.

Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation's new Primary Health Care Service was completed in April and there was a very smooth transition from the former PHCS to the new building. Maari Ma CEO, Bob Davis, said the new facility was open for business less than 24 hours after the relocation meaning minimal disruption for clients. The

project, funded by Maari Ma and the state and federal governments, is providing significantly more space for an increasing number of clients accessing services. All primary health services and clinics provided by Maari Ma in the previous PHCS building are being delivered from the new facility. In addition, Primary Care Specialist Services staff,

including mental health workers and dietitians, are also now co-located. Maari Ma's corporate and administrative staff, who were previously on the site of the new PHCS, relocated to other premises when construction started. They have now moved into the former PHCS building. *More photos on page 2.*

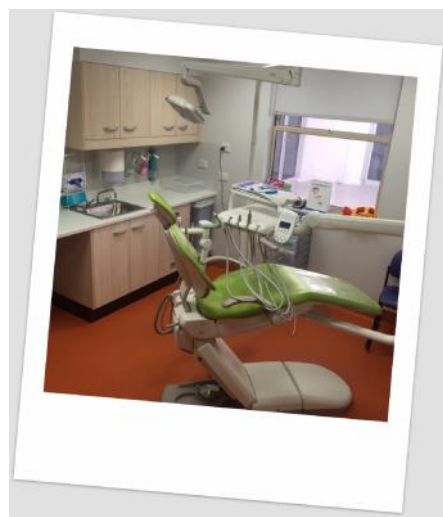
## QIC ACCREDITATION

There are 18 Quality Improvement Council (QIC) Health and Community Services Standards, which consist of three sections common to all human services organisations and Maari Ma has met them all, including exceeding in one - Core Standard 1.6: Knowledge management. Congratulations Maari Ma on the great result which means organisational accreditation for another three years.

MAARI MA HEALTH  
ABORIGINAL  
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SERVICE



# MAARI MA'S NEW PHCS — QUALITY SERVICE DELIVERY



*Pictured left to right:* The community kitchen, a clinic room and one of two dental rooms provide examples of the quality of the new PHCS. In recognition of the building, Maari Ma was a winner in the Broken Hill City Council 2015 John Reid Memorial Heritage Awards in the Commercial /Corporate category.



## JUSTICE HEALTH AGREEMENT

Maari Ma has signed a memorandum of understanding with Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network (JH&FMHN) aimed at improving access to health care for Aboriginal patients on release from custody. The MOU is initially until July next year and will ensure that appropriate release planning occurs for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and Maari Ma clients returning to the community. Under the MOU Maari Ma Health will participate in pre-release planning and deliver post release follow-up services to Aboriginal patients where appropriate. There will also be regular joint reviews to see if the planning and handover processes result in newly released patients accessing ongoing quality health care.

*Maari Ma CEO, Bob Davis and Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network Chief Executive, Julie Babineau, signed the MOU. Maari Ma is pleased to be working with JH&FMHN which actively engages with a number of Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services in partnership discussions and negotiations to improve the quality of care for Aboriginal patients in custody and post-release.*

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## NEW TRAINEE COHORT TO START

Maari Ma is soon to start a new Primary Health Worker Training Program in what will be the third Primary Health Worker cohort to combine study at the Western Institute of TAFE, Broken Hill with on the job training at Maari Ma. The trainees will be employed for an 18 month program to complete a Certificate IV Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health (Practice). A large number of applicants have been

interviewed for six trainee positions in Broken Hill and two in Wilcannia. Training Indigenous Primary Health Workers continues to be Maari Ma's most significant workforce development strategy. Maari Ma's qualified health workers have all achieved registration with the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency (AHPRA) which is formal recognition of their status as clinicians within the health industry.



## LONG SERVING GP FAREWELLED

It was with much regret that Maari Ma recently farewelled long serving GP, Dr Penny Roberts-Thomson, who retired to spend more time with her family. It was both a pleasure and a privilege for staff and clients to have had Dr Roberts –Thomson working at the health service for such a long time. Maari Ma has a dedicated team of eight GPs, both part time and full time, as well as two registrars, providing care to clients within its chronic disease prevention and management program. Clients also continue to benefit from visits by specialists providing services in Broken Hill as well as to outlying communities which negate the need for client travel to capital cities.

*Left: Dr Penny Roberts-Thomson is pictured at her farewell with Manager Community Services and Programs, Justin Files.*

## PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORK CONSORTIUM

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Maari Ma, Bila Muuji Aboriginal Health Service, and the Far West and Western Medicare Locals combined to successfully bid to establish the Western Primary Health Network. The PHNs replace Medicare Locals and they became operational on July 1<sup>st</sup>. The newly created Western PHN will be working to link health agencies, improve access to services as well as improve coordination of care. The Western PHN covers Balranald, Bourke, Brewarrina, Broken Hill, Cobar, Condobolin, Coonabarabran, Dareton, Dubbo, Forbes, Grenfell, Ivanhoe, Lightning Ridge, Menindee, Oberon, Orange, Walgett, Wentworth and Wilcannia. The region covers 450,000 square kilometres and includes 320,000 people.

# EARLY YEARS



*Dads are becoming increasingly engaged with Playgroup and are encouraged to attend.*

The Broken Hill Healthy Start Playgroup continues to go from strength to strength operating during the school term for children aged 0 – five years. Playgroup is facilitated by Early Years Project Leader, Lesley Harvey, and the team includes a dietitian, early childhood nurse, Aboriginal family health worker and a child care assistant. Maari Ma's Callan Rogers has been joined by Bilyara Bates assisting Playgroup. Dads are encouraged to attend and a number of men are joining in. In Broken Hill, another early years program - Little Kids and Books is embedded into Playgroup. Little Kids and Books is also held in Wilcannia at St Theresa's Community School with Save the Children's Playgroup each Tuesday, and in Menindee at the Children's Centre every second Thursday.



*Children and families have been reading new books this term in the Little Kids and Books program, and love taking them home.*

## PUBLISHED

Maari Ma's Manager Community Engagement, Kaylene Kemp, and MH/AOD Worker, Fiona Mitchell, as part of the Wellbeing Study Team, have had a paper published from the Study titled *A 'Wellbeing Framework' for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples living with chronic disease*. The study sought to improve the accessibility and acceptability of primary health care services by developing a framework for delivering care in a way that reflects Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people's needs, values and priorities – including the important roles of family, community, culture, spirituality and connections to Country. The Wellbeing Study was undertaken between June 2013 and December 2014. The paper is published in the proceedings of the 13th National Rural Health Conference May 2015, Darwin.

The published paper provides unique insights into how the Wellbeing Framework was developed and reflects on the value of 'both way' learning within collaborative research projects.



*Kaylene Kemp is pictured second from left during the qualitative research of the project. The workshop marked stage three of the Wellbeing Framework. The paper's abstract was adapted from Kanyini Vascular Collaboration which was established in 2005 and is a collaboration between the George Institute for Global Health, and Baker IDI Heart and Diabetes Institute.*



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