

MAARI MA HEALTH ROUNDS

NEW CHILD AND FAMILY UNIT



Maari Ma's child and family services have increased significantly in the past 18 months and the new premises are meeting the growing need for increased space for this specialised area.

Maari Ma now has a new purpose built health facility for Aboriginal families and their children. The Child and Family Health Unit was officially opened in September by the Minister for Western New South Wales, the Hon Kevin Humphries MP and Maari Ma Board Chair and Baakintji Elder, Maureen O'Donnell. At the opening Mr Humphries described the Unit as 'world class'. The Child and Family Unit is situated at the rear of the Primary Health Care Service in Argent Street, Broken Hill and was purpose built in Adelaide. There are three clinic rooms

together with indoor and outdoor waiting rooms, and landscaped gardens. Three GP child health clinics are conducted each week together with a range of other services for children and their families including pre-pregnancy and ante-natal programs. Activities such as Playgroup, mother and baby groups and cooking groups are also being developed and will progress further in 2012. The need for a new building followed a significant increase in the services Maari Ma is providing to families and children in the region.

IN THIS ISSUE

Child and Family Unit Opens	1
Playgroup	2
Wings Drop In Centre	2
PHC Worker trainees graduate and a new cohort starts	3
Maari Ma, as an organisation, going for accreditation	3
Health information through community interaction	4
National award nominations	4

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PLAYGROUP — A HEALTHY START



developmentally appropriate play, healthy food and opportunities for brief interventions with families and their children. It was originally thought that Playgroup would be held within the Child and Family Unit but the numbers have increased so much during the year that any new programs there need to be smaller and based on parents' ideas.

"We are seeing families involved in play and group experiences – this is what early learning is all about, families as children's first teachers" Narelle Pascoe, Early Years Project Leader.

Maari Ma's Healthy Start Playgroup, which is conducted each Friday at TAFE, is going from strength to strength and is increasing in numbers significantly. The Playgroup really has become a Healthy Start program with a motivated and passionate team approach to providing a weekly program which is promoting

The Playgroup team is asking parents to prioritise what activities they would specifically like to have in the Unit such as a Playgroup just for dads, one for first time or new mums or one that focuses on pregnant women.

WINGS

The Wings Drop-In Centre at Wilcannia implements a range of activities and holiday programs for children aged 5 – 18 and has been able to increase these during the year with the addition of more staff. Four workers, Coordinator Candela Alvarez, Tony Gilfoyle, Natika Whyman and new recruit Kyle Whyman run the program for after school and holidays and they are currently undertaking a Youth Worker Trainee Certificate 1V course through Tafe Western Orange campus which will formalise their skills and knowledge. Up to 100 children take part in activities at any one time or more with special events. The holiday programs are well patronised and some great activities are planned for the coming holiday season.



Discos are a popular event at Wings and one is planned after the last day of school this year. During the year more than 120 kids turned up for "OWN IT on the dance floor – Children's and Youth Disco " which was held following a Youth Week grant of \$500 from Central Darling Shire Council.

TRAINEES GRADUATE AND A NEW INTAKE STARTS

In August this year, Maari Ma's group of Primary Health Care Worker trainees became fully qualified health care workers after completing two years of study and on the job training. The group completed their study in February this year and were the first in New South Wales to have a 100 per-cent completion rate of the course – Certificate IV Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health (Practice). Their desire to continue learning hasn't stopped there and some of the health workers are looking towards midwifery, registered nursing and the diabetes educator course next year. The trainee

cohort was one of five finalists in the 2011 Deadly's - the National Indigenous Music, Sport, Entertainment & Community Awards aimed at recognising the contribution of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders to their community and to Australian society.

While the success of the new graduates has been a highlight this year, Maari Ma has also welcomed a new group of trainees to the Certificate IV course. They started in October with orientation and will have completed two Tafe study blocks by the end of the year while doing on the job training.



Qualified PHCW's from Wilcannia Belinda King, Katy Jasper and Doug Jones, pictured with Primary Health Nurse, Tracey Hesketh (second from right), and Team Leader, Jodi Kent. The other graduates are Codi King, Stevie Kemp, Chris O'Donnell, Shannon Hinton, Tiffany Cattermole, Dimity Kelly and Kelly-Anne Mackay.



A new group of Primary Health Care Worker trainees has started at Maari Ma. Back: Luke O'Donnell (Broken Hill) Prissy Stephens (Menindee) Jamie Billing (Broken Hill) Nathan Kickett (Broken Hill) Justin Harris (Wilcannia) Front Tarnee Tester (Broken Hill) Jeda Sloane (Broken Hill) Gemmah Shillingsworth (Wilcannia) Raelene Campbell (Wilcannia), Maari Ma CEO, Bob Davis.

ACCREDITATION

Early this year Maari Ma was successful in gaining re - accreditation for the Primary Health Care Service in Broken Hill through AGPAL — Australian General Practice Accreditation Ltd. The process takes a great deal of work and dedication from staff but the end result is a facility where the delivery of safe, high quality health care is assured. In March 2012 Maari Ma will be assessed as an

organisation to attain QIC (Quality Improvement Council) Accreditation. QIC Accreditation certifies that the organisation has met relevant standards and is participating in the QIC Program to build continuous quality improvement. The formal four day review will be held in March 2012 and will include the Regional Office, Primary Health Care Service and Wings.

COMMUNITY INTERACTION



The information stand above was set up in the Broken Hill Town Square to provide information and raise awareness about mental health. A community BBQ (right) was held at Wilcannia near the banks of the Darling River to do the same—have a yarn and share information in an informal setting.

Maari Ma has a proactive approach to information stands and informal community events as it's an excellent way of delivering health messages and information to community members who may not necessarily seek out assistance. A good example of this were promotions during Mental Health Month in October when the Primary Care Specialist Services team set up a Stress Less Day health promotion stall in the Broken Hill Town Square and also hosted a BBQ at Wilcannia where community members had a chance to have a yarn and take away mental health resources as well as extras to give to others. During these events there's also the opportunity to provide health checks such as blood pressure checks and taking blood sugar levels.



NATIONAL DEADLY NOMINATIONS

While Maari Ma didn't walk away with the top awards at the 2011 Deadlys we did come away winners for achieving places in the top five finalist positions in two categories. Senior Health Care Worker and Clinical Team Leader at the Primary Health Care Service, Colin O'Donnell, was one of five national finalists in the Health Worker of the Year category and Maari Ma's recently graduated

Aboriginal Health Worker Trainee Cohort was one of five national finalists in the Outstanding Achievement in Aboriginal Health category. The Deadlys are annual National Indigenous Music, Sport, Entertainment and Community Awards. They were announced in September at a gala evening at the Sydney Opera House hosted by Aaron Pedersen and singer Casey Donovan.



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