



ADULT HEALTH CHECKS AT THE PRIMARY HEALTH CARE SERVICE



Broken Hill Primary Health Care Service worker, Colin O'Donnell, checks the blood sugar level of client, Frank Ettrich, at an Adult Health Check at the Health Care Service. Colin also looks after the Pathology and Physical Assessment Station and is the Health Care Service's Diabetes Educator.

The Adult Health Check encourages early detection, diagnosis and intervention for common and treatable conditions. Adult Health Checks started at the PHCS in September last year and 62 clients have been seen to date. A further 7 Adult Health Checks are to be undertaken during the remainder of this year with an average 10-15 clients seen per check. Clients undertake a fasting blood test and undergo a total of 7 stations in the morning including the doctor assessment.

In our news magazine

Page 1

Adult Health Checks at the Broken Hill Primary Health Care Service

Page 2

Re-current funding announced for dental therapist and assistant

Wilcannia Community Kitchen

Page 3

Menindee Health Service Opening

Menindee Lose for Life

Aboriginal Mental Health

Page 4

New Faces

MOU with Mallee Family Care



Recurrent Funding Approval for Dental Therapist and Assistant



NSW Chief Dental Officer, Dr Clive Wright is pictured with Maari Ma Regional Director, Richard Weston during a recent visit to Broken Hill. Dr Wright was pleased to offer ongoing funding for the oral health component of Maari Ma's Healthy Start program. He praised Maari Ma's commitment to improving oral health in Aboriginal children in the region, and the innovative approaches adopted by the dental team of Erin Commins, Dental Therapist, and Tirrell Kennedy, Dental Assistant.

Wilcannia Community Get Together(AKA Community Kitchen)

The Wilcannia Community Get Together has turned one and is still going strong! The first Get Together kicked off in April 2006 and since then eight successful events have been held, with more than 1,300 healthy meals going out to the people of Wilcannia. The Get Togethers are held monthly at the Wilcannia Community Hall and offer the community a chance to enjoy some healthy tucker and a yarn with other community members. The community kitchen members (the Women's Safe House ladies) staff the kitchen and decide on the theme for the month, while the Maari Ma dieticians provide guidance and support with healthy recipes consistent with that theme. When the big day comes the women work tirelessly to prepare the food, set up the hall and dish out the good tucker. At the end of the night any leftovers are boxed up and delivered around the town to families unable to attend. Community Kitchens provide a unique forum for health promotion and the development of skills and abilities in preparing nutritious and affordable meals as well as helping to improve food security, but the benefits reach far beyond improvements in nutrition.

The Get Togethers work to foster the town's sense of community, encourage the development of social networks and increase companionship and friendship. The kitchen members experience increases in self-esteem and self-confidence, form friendships, develop new skills and improve their

work ethics. Another benefit we have noticed in the Wilcannia kitchen is the development of positive mentoring relationships between the women and younger girls in the kitchen group. The Community Kitchen project is based on a well-established model in Canada. The Australian Community Kitchen's philosophy is to further develop a sense of community around healthy food, which we feel we are starting to achieve in Wilcannia.

Catherine Long— Healthy Start Dietician



....When the big day comes the women work tirelessly to prepare the food, set up the hall and dish out the good tucker....

MENINDEE HEALTH SERVICE OPENING



Menindee Primary Health Care Worker, Geraldine Rolton, is pictured with The Hon. Tony Kelly, MLC, during a tour of the new Menindee Health Service. Minister Kelly officially opened the Health Service earlier this year. Staff moved into the \$2.4 M facility in February last year and the spacious layout for effective service delivery is being very much appreciated by both staff and the community.

LOSE FOR LIFE– Menindee

More than 20 people are taking part in a weight loss program at Menindee called Lose for Life. The program has been modelled on the successful Wellington Challenge and incorporates nutrition, education and physical exercise. Local staff have been undertaking the education sessions and two community members trained in fitness instruction volunteer their time for the exercise component of the program. Primary Health Care Worker, Geraldine Rolton, has been coordinating Lose for Life with the help of PHCW, David Doyle. The final weigh in is scheduled for late June with a second Lose for Life program hoped to start in Menindee in August.

Aboriginal Mental Health

Justin Files (pictured) was one of six Aboriginal Mental Health Workers and one NGO Family Support Worker to undertake the national launch of the Aboriginal Mental Health First Aid program. The program was conducted at the Centre for Remote and Rural Mental Health at Bloomfield Hospital in Orange. It's designed to train Aboriginal people to identify early signs of mental health issues until professional assistance can be accessed and aims to bring a similar understanding to mental health first aid as physical first aid. Justin says with his training he will be able to co-facilitate general Mental Health First Aid courses.

"..The benefits, I feel, will be helping families who live with people experiencing mental health problems and better equip them in times of a crisis. It will also help their understanding of mental health issues. I also feel that health workers like the community members, will become empowered and more proactive in their communities with the general mental health knowledge that they have acquired from the Mental Health First Aid course"



Justine Files—Community Development Worker (Chronic Disease Programs– Alcohol, Smoking and Mental Health)

NEW FACES



Cathy Dyer (left) has taken up the position of Manager Primary Health Care Programs and Catherine Long is working as a Healthy Start Dietician.



Shannon Hinton works in the regional office part time as an administration assistant.

MOU SIGNED WITH MALLEE FAMILYCARE

Mallee Family Care and Maari Ma sign historic co-operative health agreement

Pact to underpin a new holistic era

By GRANT MAYNARD

A LANDMARK agreement signed this week paves the way for a much more holistic approach to indigenous health on the New South Wales side of Sunraysia.

The agreement formalises a community health partnership between two giants of the sector in the Wentworth Shire – the Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation and Mallee Family Care.

Maari Ma Health manages indigenous health services in the Wentworth and Balranald Local Government areas, co-operating strongly with Greater Western Area Health Service.

Mallee Family Care is the key provider of youth and family services in the Wentworth Shire and family services in the Balranald Shire.

Signing the agreement yesterday were Maari Ma's regional director Richard Weston and MFC's deputy executive director, Fiona Harley.

Mr Weston said Maari Ma's adoption of a holistic approach to health through its Chronic Disease Strategy recognised that poor health arising from lifestyle choices was often more reflective of unrelenting socio-economic constraints rather than personal preferences.

"So Maari Ma is keen to promote an integrated,

WE AGREE: Peter Nunan, MFC manager of youth and family services for NSW and Mark Kickett, Aboriginal Health Co-ordinator Maari Ma Health, watch Fiona Harley and Richard Weston sign the agreement this week.



intersectoral and whole-of-life approach," he said.

"The complementary nature of philosophies and services of both Maari Ma and Mallee Family Care lends itself to the formation of strategic partnership with MFC's

established youth and family services and programs.

"It makes sense." The pair said the primary purpose of forming a strategic partnership between Maari Ma Health and Mallee Family Care

would be to foster and strengthen co-operative and collaborative service delivery for communities in the south west of New South Wales.

"By working together we are confident of delivering better outcomes for

our clients and the wider community," the pair said.

The forum for the signing was a special youth-focused meeting between the two organisations at Dareton's Coomealla Health Aboriginal Corporation on Wednesday, the purpose being to focus the resources of both Maari Ma and MFC on addressing youth issues of a common interest.

The two organisations have been working in a loose partnership for some time, but this week's signing formalises the alliance, long-time proponent and MFC youth and family services' Paul McCullagh, said.

The goals of the partnership will be achieved by initiatives including:

- Identifying community needs in conjunction with the Community Working Party

- Forming a cooperative approach to Social and Emotional Wellbeing for Youth and Families.

- Adopting a "best practice" approach to meeting community Social and Emotional needs.

- Effectively utilizing current and future resources of Maari Ma Health and Mallee Family Care for the mutual benefit of the communities within the areas they serve.

- Engendering and supporting the development of indigenous leadership in the community.

Maari Ma has signed a memorandum of understanding with Mallee Family Care (MFC) in Dareton which will further cement the ties both organisations have. MFC is a Victorian based social program provider and has been working with Maari Ma on a youth program called Youth Action Project. Maari Ma employs a youth worker in Dareton who is placed with MFC. Maari Ma also supports the 'Our Journey to Respect' project, which targets Indigenous male youth at risk of using violence. MFC provides a range of other programs that are directed towards building healthy relationships in families and the community. The MOU allows for both organisations to collaborate on the future expansion of youth programs and other community based projects. MFC has already made use of Haythorpe Station and there are plans to use the property again this year to host a number of men's and women's groups.

Newspaper article courtesy Mildura Weekly.



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