

# MAARI MA HEALTH ROUNDS

## Meet Our Primary Health Care Trainees



Front left to right; Katy Jasper (Wilcannia) Nicole Hughes (Ivanhoe) Chris O'Donnell (Broken Hill) and Tiffany Cattermole (Broken Hill). Back left to right; Belinda King (Wilcannia), Kelly-Anne Williams (Dareton), Stevie Kemp (Broken Hill), Dimity Kelly (Menindee), Codi King (Broken Hill), Douglas Jones (Wilcannia) and Shannon Hinton.

We have a new group of Primary Health Care Worker trainees who have attended two study blocks at the Broken Hill TAFE and almost completed five modules. The diploma course traditionally completed at the Broken Hill University Department of Rural Health is no longer available and Maari Ma looked at new ways of training health workers. By recruiting a group all at one time we have been able to arrange training with the Western Institute of TAFE in Certificate IV Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Primary Health (Practice).

Most of the blocks are delivered in Broken Hill with some tutorials at most sites. The Certificate will be the first step in a pathway to registered nurse training or other specialised qualifications in child & family health, diabetes, primary mental health, alcohol & other drugs or nutrition. The group of trainees from throughout the Maari Ma region join our current Primary Health Care Workers to improve access to services and the health of our communities.

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# INTRODUCING MAARI MA'S NEW CEO



Photo courtesy Gavin Schmidt, BDT

Maari Ma has welcomed a new CEO, Bob Davis. Mr Davis has more than 25 years experience at the executive director level in Aboriginal health in New

South Wales and Queensland. He has been appointed to head the organisation following the departure earlier this year of Richard Weston. Mr Davis was the Director of Land, Policy and Research with the New South Wales Aboriginal Land Council prior to taking up the post. Other positions have included CEO of the Cape York Health Council and CEO of Biripi Aboriginal Corporation Medical Service for ten years, a community controlled Aboriginal health service based on the New South Wales Mid North Coast. He also has wide experience in serving on Aboriginal community health committees, and local and international policy development groups. He was a founding member of the Healing Our Spirit Worldwide movement in Berlin in 1990, now the largest Indigenous health movement in the world.

## LONG SERVICE RECOGNITION AWARDS



Primary Health Care Worker, Colin O'Donnell (pictured top left) and Primary Health Care Service Practice Manager, Kaylene Kemp, ( pictured bottom left) were awarded with certificates at a recent 'all of staff' gathering in Broken Hill by Maari Ma's Director of Operations, Nola Whyman. Both Colin and Kaylene have worked for Maari Ma for more than ten years and are exemplary staff members. Colin's training as an Aboriginal Health Worker progressed to a 12 month Diabetes Educator Course at Flinders University and he has now finished his second year of registered nurse training at Charles Sturt University. Kaylene started at Maari Ma as a temporary clerk in 1998 and moved to administration officer in 2001 and then Practice Manager of the Primary Health Care Service in Broken Hill in 2007. She completed her Certificate IV in Practice Management in the same year and was a key player in the PHCS obtaining its Australian General Practice Accreditation Limited status.

Maari Ma has two full time doctors and three part time doctors now working at the PHCS, Wilcannia and at Menindee, and in the six months to December 2009 seven thousand clients attended the PHCS. To meet the increasing needs of staff and clients the building is undergoing renovations which will be completed in the New Year.



# A PICTURE OF OUR CHILDREN

*Health, Development and Wellbeing in Far Western NSW, A Picture of our Children*, was recently launched at Alma Bugdlie Pre-School by Senator, the Hon Mark Arbib, Federal Minister for Employment Participation and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister on Government Service Delivery. The document is aimed at improving child development and well being for Aboriginal children in the far west and is the culmination of more than 18 months work by six government and non government agencies. Through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG), all governments have pledged to develop and implement coordinated strategies to address the key causes and determinants of Indigenous disadvantage and close 'the gap'. Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation, which is co-chair of the group that developed the strategic framework document, has been committed to working with other agencies to achieve this goal.

*"The document will assist all agencies working with children to collaborate, plan, resource and implement programs, and monitor changes made."*

*Bob Davis Maari Ma CEO*



*Senator, the Hon Mark Arbib, meets children at Alma Bugdlie Pre-School. Photo courtesy Gavin Schmidt, BDT*

## NEW MENTAL HEALTH TEAM



*Maari Ma's Mental Health Team, left to right, Chelsea Hodge - Primary Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs Worker, Lisa Kickett - Aboriginal Mental Health Trainee, Peter Crossing - PMH and AOD Worker, Haley King - AOD Worker and Justin Files - Program Leader.*

Maari Ma's Primary Mental Health and Alcohol and Other Drugs team has increased from two staff five years ago to four mental health workers and one trainee. They are now starting to take GP referrals for primary mental health which will compliment the secondary and tertiary services already delivered by the Area Health Service's Broken Hill Mental Health, and Drug and Alcohol team. Up until now the Maari Ma team has focused only on AOD service delivery issues however they've recently completed the service development work to establish the primary mental health component of the service. It will include assessment, brief treatment and interventions, supportive counselling and referral.

## OUR YOUNG LEADERS



*Finance Assistant, Bobbie Slater, pictured left and Primary Health Worker trainee, Shannon Hinton completed leadership training this year.*

Primary Health Worker trainee, Shannon Hinton and Finance Assistant, Bobbie Slater, both completed the 12 month Aboriginal Leadership Program this year. The Department of Families, Housing, Community Services and Indigenous Affairs (FaHCSIA) offers leadership development opportunities to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, men and young people over the age of 18 to help them become strong leaders in their communities and to help them reach their highest potential. Both Shannon and Bobbie say they felt very privileged to have been given the opportunity to take part in the program. Other staff who have completed the FaHCSIA program are former Administration Assistant Renae Roach who was appointed this year to the position of Workforce Training Coordinator and Donna Kennedy, Team Leader Social and Community Programs.

## WILCANNIA'S COMMUNITY DINNERS

Wilcannia's Community Dinners have been running for more than three years and the enthusiasm from residents to help and learn has continued to grow. Up to 100 people turn up each month at the Wilcannia Community Hall to enjoy a meal together. The preparation and cooking is carried out by volunteers, mainly women and children, and supported by Maari Ma's dieticians. As well as encouraging community engagement and social participation, the dinners provide a forum for health promotion and increased knowledge and skills of food.



*Wilcannia volunteers Lorina, Roslyn and Allan pictured in the kitchen with dieticians Carly Pollard and Mark Lee.*



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