

## Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation

## Community Newsletter





# Merry Christmas

## FROM ALL OF US!

On Friday the 1st of December, Maari Ma staff from Broken Hill and Wilcannia came together for our annual staff meeting. It was a busy but enjoyable day where staff members got to share what impact Maari Ma is having on the community. There were some great presentations from the teams with interviews of community members talking about our different programs. It was fantastic to see that overall Maari Ma is having a positive effect on the community and it was good to hear ideas on how we can improve our services and programs.

Our staff would like to wish you and your family a very Merry Christmas and a safe and Happy New Year. We hope to see you and your family in 2018!

# I've Been Waiting For Christmas



I've been waiting for Christmas,  
And it's almost here.  
I've been waiting for Christmas,  
Santa's getting near.  
Can't you hear the sleigh bells ringing?  
Reindeer up so high.  
Can't you hear the children singing,  
As they watch the sky?

## CHRISTMAS CLOSURE

Maari Ma Health (Regional Office & Primary Health Care Service) will be closed from Monday the 25th of December, reopening on Wednesday the 3rd of January 2018.

During the closure if you are sick you will need to present to the Broken Hill Health Service. If it is an emergency, please call 000.



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**Maari Ma Primary Health Care Service**

"Improving Aboriginal health and closing the gap"  
Broken Hill, NSW



[www.maarima.com.au](http://www.maarima.com.au)



[admin@maarima.com.au](mailto:admin@maarima.com.au)



[www.facebook.com/maarimahealth/](https://www.facebook.com/maarimahealth/)



# WORLD COPD DAY

**Maari Ma Health held an event for World COPD Day which was on Wednesday the 15th of November.**

A number of activities were organised at the Primary Health Care Service for community to participate in to raise awareness about COPD (Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease) and smoking.

COPD significantly affects Indigenous people, particularly those in rural and remote areas. The current death rate from COPD among Indigenous people is 5 times that for non-Indigenous people. National statistics show that COPD affects around 20% of Indigenous adults, but this percentage is higher for those in remote regions.



Spirometry and CO (carbon monoxide) screening was offered to clients on the day and community members were keen to check their lung health. There were discussions around causes, diagnosis and management of COPD, as well as smoking and quitting. There were also lung challenges with prizes, a pancake breakfast and plenty of information to give away.

If you are a smoker and have COPD, quitting is the most important thing you can do to help yourself. Maari Ma's Tackling Indigenous Smoking team can support you on your quit journey and we also have a Smoker's Program that can be accessed through our Primary Health Care Service.

*Thank you to the YMCA for donating Aquatic Centre membership as prizes, and thanks to all staff who helped out and our community members for attending.*



# WHITE RIBBON DAY

**White Ribbon Day is held on November the 25th.**

This day aims to raise awareness about men's violence against women. There are many things we can do to help a woman or family who is experiencing violence.

If someone discloses violence to you, they are showing enormous trust in you. It is important to show respect and maintain this trust. If you are worried about someone's safety, you must consider helping them to take action. However, sometimes just listening to someone and acknowledging their experience is enough. It is important that someone making a disclosure is not forced into taking action. It is also important to think about the 'one chance rule': don't dismiss the opportunity for a person to share their story as they may not share it again. When talking about their options, safety must be the main priority and they must feel in control of the situation and what happens next.

Unless you have a qualification, you can't offer counselling. However, there are some important and helpful things you can do:

- Listen to the person
- Show you believe them
- Take the disclosure seriously
- Let them know about local services
- Offer them practical support

It can be difficult hearing about a person's experience of violence. After hearing their story, take time to observe your own feelings and look after yourself.

*- Information from White Ribbon Australia*

## In support of

Australia's campaign to stop men's violence against women



## TOBACCO TIPS FOR THE HOLIDAY SEASON

The holidays are often a time of family, friends, and celebration, which also means shopping, parties, and resolutions. It's no surprise that the holiday season can also be a time of stress, making it difficult to quit tobacco or to stay tobacco free.

Try these tips for managing stress and staying tobacco free during the holidays.

**Stress**—Make a list of stress relievers and keep it close by for when you're feeling overwhelmed by holiday activities. If you need to relax, try using one of your favourite stress busters, or try exercising, doing a puzzle, or meditation instead of taking a tobacco break.

**Meals**— After a meal you may want to reach for a cigarette or other tobacco product. Keep sugar-free gum or mints in your pocket, brush your teeth, talk with someone, or go for a walk to avoid reaching for tobacco after eating.

**Alcohol**—If you find that drinking alcohol makes you want to use tobacco, consider cutting back or not drinking alcoholic beverages while you're quitting. Try a different celebratory beverage, like a glass of sparkling cider.

**Money**—Keep a jar in your house and fill it up with the money you

aren't spending on tobacco. Pretty soon you'll have enough to buy a holiday gift for a loved one (or yourself). Use a clear container so you can see your savings adding up.

**Support**—Let your family and friends know that you have quit or are in the process of quitting. If any of them use tobacco, ask them to do so outside or in a separate area, and request they not invite you to join.

**REMEMBER:** Pre-plan your Christmas time with extra NRT, relaxation, exercise and a support person/network. Lifeline is a 24-hour 7-day a week counselling service on 131 114. Talk about your feelings to help reduce the cravings that can occur during emotionally challenging times.

*Light a candle at Christmas for your loved ones.... not a cigarette!!*





## 6 WEEK WALKING CHALLENGE

Maari Ma's 6 week walking challenge started in October and finished up earlier this month. The challenge was to get to 10,000 steps a day for 6 weeks.

Exercise has been proven to be an effective way of helping your mental health, wellbeing and also your physical health.

The community challenge had 3 positive community members turning up to the walking group each week. Thanks to **Hannah Bennett, Jo-Anne Cole** and **Sharon Ginn**. All 3 women did an amazing job. Hannah took out the most steps, Jo took out the most continuous steps and Sharon took out the most improved amount of steps. Prizes will be given to the participants soon.

For the staff challenge, a few dropped off at the beginning, but everyone else kept up the good work. Most steps went to our Dental Assistant, **Penny Billings**. Penny averaged 13,000 steps a day so well done Penny!

*Thank you for everyone's hard work and commitment. Hopefully we might be able to run the challenge again next year.*



## PLAYGROUP CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Playgroup Christmas Party was held on Friday the 8th of December in Sturt Park from 10.30am to 1pm. Thank you to all of the families for coming along.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from Maari Ma's Early Years team.

We hope to see you all in 2018!





## CONGRATULATIONS NATIKA!

WINGS Co-ordinator, **Natika Whyman**, recently received a special recognition at this year's Youth Action Youth Work Awards which were held at a gala ceremony in Sydney.

Natika received a highly commended certificate in the NSW Youth Worker of the Year category. Natika was one of 28 nominations from across the state in that category. We are all very proud of her and the work she does at the WINGS Drop-In Centre in Wilcannia. Well done Natika!

*Natika Whyman receiving her certificate*



## 2018 NAIDOC THEME ANNOUNCED

*Next year's theme for NAIDOC week has been announced; Because of her, we can!*

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have played and continue to play active and significant roles at the community, local, state and national levels.

As leaders, trailblazers, politicians, activists and social change advocates, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women fought and continue to fight, for justice, equal rights, our rights to country, for law and justice, access to education, employment and to maintain and celebrate our culture, language, music and art.

They continue to influence as doctors, lawyers, teachers, electricians, chefs, nurses, architects, rangers, emergency and defence personnel, writers, volunteers, chief executive officers, actors, singer songwriters, journalists, entrepreneurs, media personalities, board members, accountants, academics, sporting icons and Olympians.

They are our mothers, our elders, our grandmothers, our aunts, our sisters and our daughters.

Sadly, Indigenous women's role in our cultural, social and political survival has often been invisible, unsung or diminished. For at least 65,000 years, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women have carried our dreaming stories, songlines, languages and knowledge that have kept our culture strong and enriched us as the oldest continuing culture on the planet. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women were there at first contact and it is "because of her" that we can!

- Information from [naidoc.org.au](http://naidoc.org.au)



## ATTENTION ALL CHILDREN! We have received a report that Santa is in Broken Hill.

YOU CAN SEE SANTA AT:  
**CENTRO PLAZA**

MONDAY—SATURDAY,  
1ST DECEMBER  
UNTIL THE 23RD OF DECEMBER

11AM—12PM

*He arrived earlier this month and will be in town until Christmas Eve when he embarks on his annual toy delivery run. Of course he will be very busy in the lead up to Christmas, but we hear he'll be taking a break from his present making so he can meet the local children.*



## LUKE & SHARON'S QUIT STORY

**Luke Degoumois** is a Broken Hill born and bred man. He grew up around the stations with his parents, who are from Wilcannia. **Sharon Ginn** was born in the U.K and raised in Adelaide. She met Luke online, they fell in love, and she moved to Broken Hill to be with him 4 years ago.

Luke and Sharon were smokers, but they have been smoke free for about 4 months now and that's why they are our Quit Champions of this month! Their quit journeys in the past have been different, but they were together in their last quit attempt. They got on the Smokers Program and were initially working with Shannon Oates and later Kayelene Crossing. While it was the NRT patches that did wonders for Sharon, Luke went on Champix as well as the patches. Throughout the quitting process they stayed strong and supported each other. They tried to stay away from parties and had a great time ripping off each others NRT patches!

Luke's first ever smoke was at the age of 5 when he picked up a cigar-butt off a street in Sydney. However, it was about 5 years later when he was pinching his parents' cigarettes, that he started to smoke regularly. As Luke started working, he started buying his own smokes and got addicted. As Luke put it "Everyone smoked back then... my parents, all my cousins, everyone! That's what people used to do! The Marlborough Man and other TV ads made smoking look good."

As for Sharon, her first cigarette was at the age of 11 when her friend stole one of her mum's cigarettes. At 14 years of age Sharon was pinching her dad's cigarettes because it was considered cool to smoke. It was then that she realised the addiction had kicked in and at 20, she tried to quit for the first time.

When she couldn't afford the cigarettes anymore she decided it was time to give up. Sharon went cold turkey when she turned 22 and stayed smoke free for a whopping 22 years! Moving to Broken Hill was a stressful period and as there was no one to stop her smoking she unfortunately relapsed. Luke also tried to quit on different occasions, but he truly felt that he was ready to quit only when he quit with Sharon. The growing difficulty in breathing was Luke's trigger to quit and now he can't even stand the stench of cigarette smoke! What's your reason to quit?

Luke and Sharon worked out their triggers: stress,

drinks, and going out with friends, and decided to come up with a plan. For example, they started going out less and even when out, Sharon would tell her friends beforehand not to offer her smokes. At Sharon's workplace there is hardly anyone who smokes which also helped her to stay away from cigarettes.

Ever since they quit, they have been able to spend money on things they have wanted to splurge on like an exercise machine, metal detectors, car repairs and petrol money for driving out bush!

Sharon's message for the ladies, "I smoked during my pregnancy and it wasn't good. My baby wasn't growing and the delivery was premature because of high blood pressure. Best thing I did was to quit. I wish I never had picked it up in the first place."

Luke's message for the men, "Spend your time and money on better things."

Luke and Sharon also joined Maari Ma's Smoke Free Homes & Cars Project. A carbon monoxide monitor was put inside their home in the area in which they usually smoked in. When they saw that carbon monoxide was present in the air inside their home, they decided to smoke outside of their home. Sharon quit first and Luke was left outside smoking on his own. By the end of the 8 week project, Luke was also smoke free and was so proud of himself and his partner Sharon for quitting.

*If you and your partner smoke, maybe it will be easier for you to quit if you both do it together. After all love triumphs all!*



*Luke and Sharon photobombed by their cat Jacx*



# PAINTING

## AT THE BROKEN HILL REGIONAL ART GALLERY



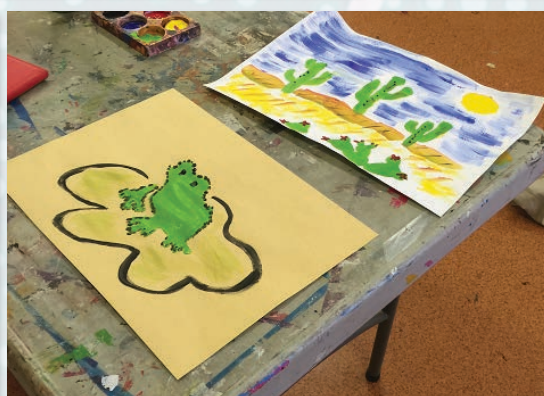
**On Wednesday the 5th of December an art class was held at the Broken Hill Regional Art Gallery.**

Members from the community were invited to come and do some painting and have a yarn. This class was not instructed so everyone was free to get creative and paint something they could take home and show their families.

The class was organised by Maari Ma's Tackling Indigenous Smoking team and classes will continue to be held regularly next

year. If this is something you would be interested in please call the TIS team on 8082 9777 as numbers for classes are limited. Lunch and transport are provided.

Thank you to community members **Celine Allan, Tassa Bennett, Coden Skerry, Gabby Bennett, Lashawn Bennett, Sarah Young, Dennis (Bulldog) Williams, Cally Doyle, Emery Doyle and Kylie McMahon** for attending our third class.



### INGREDIENTS

- Skewers
- Bananas
- Sultanas
- Strawberries
- Grapes

### METHOD

- Slice bananas.
- Slice strawberry in half lengthways.
- Assemble into snowmen!

How to make  
**A HEALTHY**  
Christmas  
Snowman



## COOKING WITH THE KIDS AT BUGDLIE/ALMA PRESCHOOL

**The kids recently made yummy healthy Christmas snowmen ready for Christmas time.**

Dietitian, **Jess** went through every body part of the snowman and said it was great to see all the children identify the ingredients used for them. The safety of skewers and how to use them properly were also discussed to make sure that the kids do not hurt themselves or others.

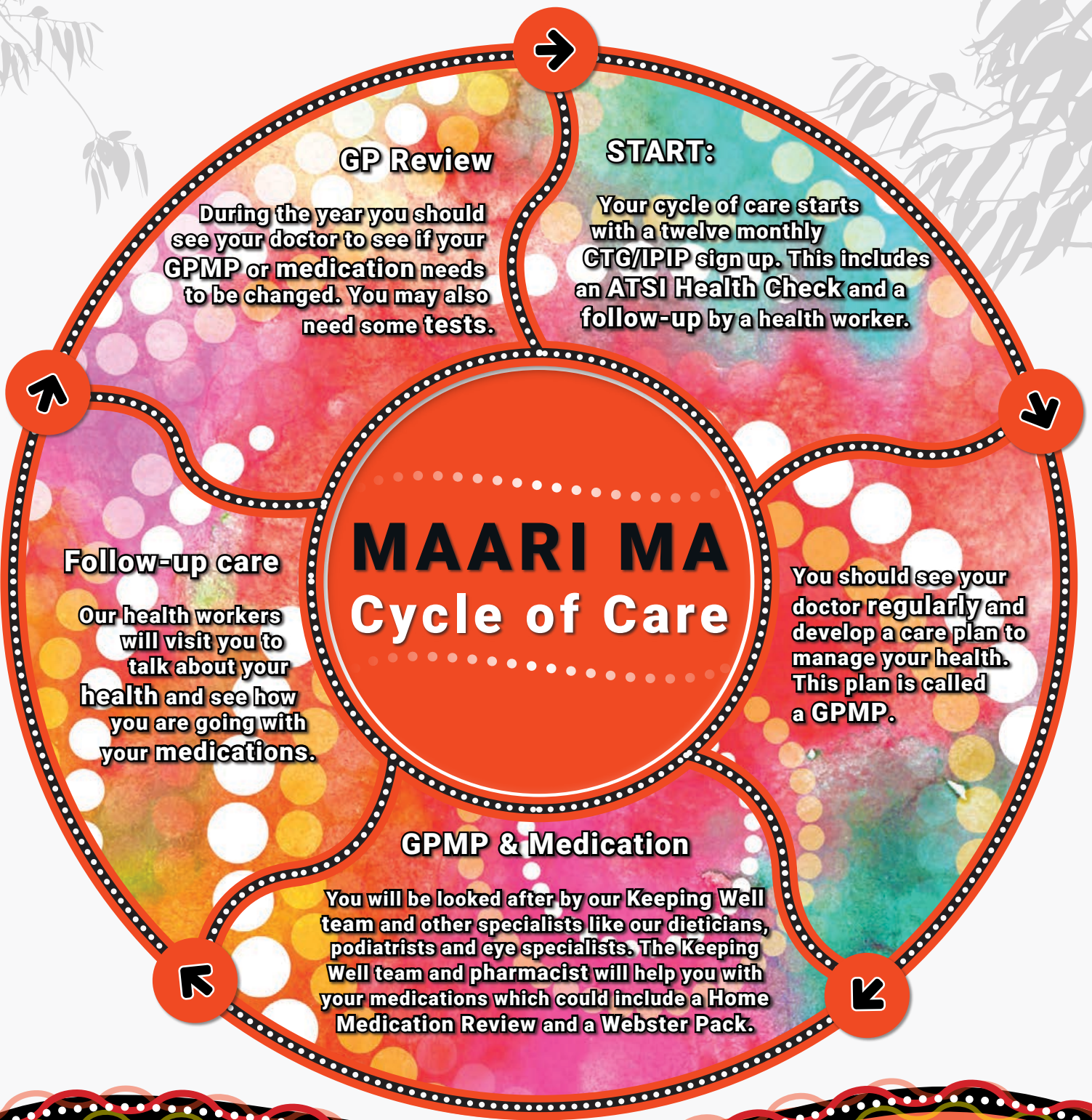
Having all of the ingredients and pictures in front of the children so they could build their snowmen from scratch was helpful. There were bananas, strawberries, grapes, sultanas and carrots which the kids could use. This was also a perfect opportunity to talk about the fact that sultanas and grapes are the same fruit. The kids gave this activity a thumbs up and many said they will make it for their family at Christmas!



**Recipe provided on Page 7.**







## Maari Ma Primary Health Care Service

*Improving Aboriginal Health & Closing the Gap...*

### About MMPHCS

Maari Ma Primary Health Care Service aims to provide culturally appropriate health services to Aboriginal people living in Broken Hill and surrounding communities.

We are governed by an all Aboriginal Board of Directors, who are deeply committed to providing an holistic approach to Aboriginal health that includes physical, emotional, spiritual, cultural and environmental dimensions.

Our health workers, doctors and nurses are committed to providing you with the highest quality care. If you ever feel that this has not been achieved, please contact the manager, Kendy Rogers, on 08 8082 9777 to discuss the matter.

*Maari Ma : Winner of Far West Business Excellence Awards for our successful service to the Aboriginal communities of the Far West.*

### Regular services

Doctors  
Nurses  
Health workers  
Child health nurses  
Midwives  
Dietician  
Primary mental health workers  
Alcohol and other drug staff  
Psychologist  
Kids dentist  
Adult dentist  
Women's health  
Pharmacist  
Social Worker

### Occasional services

Heart specialist  
Kidney specialist  
Diabetes specialist  
Child health specialist  
Eye specialist  
Alcohol specialist  
Smoking specialist  
Podiatry  
Optometrist

**439-443 Argent Street,  
Broken Hill, NSW 2880**  
Phone: 08 8082 9777 Fax: 08 8082 9778  
Web: [www.maarima.com.au](http://www.maarima.com.au)



**Kaylene Kemp**  
Manager:  
Community  
Engagement



**Kendy Rogers**  
Practice Manager:  
PHCS