

## MAARI MA ONE OF AUSTRALIA'S BEST EMPLOYERS



Maari Ma has received two Employer of Choice Awards in the 2016 Human Resource Director (HRD) Magazine Awards. The awards recognise companies that were rated by their employees across several different aspects of satisfaction and Maari Ma was recognised as Top Performer in two categories – Diversity and Inclusion, and Trust and Empowerment. Chief Executive Officer, Bob Davis, said to have this achievement recognised in a forum such as this is outstanding. “These awards acknowledge the hard work of all employees in doing everything possible to make Maari Ma a great place to work and I believe are testament to the culture that we have created built on passion and caring. We take pride in our work and importantly we are keeping our communities at the forefront of all our activities” Mr Davis said. As a winner, Maari Ma is featured in the May issue of HRD magazine.

*"In the second annual HRD Employer of Choice Awards we posed a range of questions to employees, asking about everything from their satisfaction with current remuneration through to leadership effectiveness within their organisation. Importantly, these awards were voted on not by HR professionals themselves, but the people within their organisation" Iain Hopkins, editor of HRD.*

MAARI MA HEALTH  
ABORIGINAL  
CORPORATION REGION OF  
SERVICE



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# ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH UNIT ESTABLISHED

Maari Ma has combined its work on tobacco control, and lead education and assessment to form its first Environmental Health Unit (EHU). Jessica Ierace is the Team Leader / Project Officer Smoke Free Families and Anshul Kaul has been appointed to the Project Officer Tobacco Control position. They join Lead Community Worker, Lavinia Henderson and Field Officer Thadd Nagas in the EHU – they are undertaking education and home assessments to help address the issue of lead

contamination and elevated blood lead levels in Aboriginal children. The tobacco positions are funded under a revised Federal Government Tackling Indigenous Smoking initiative which has changed to a population / environmental health and workforce capacity building approach to tackling smoking. Maari Ma's Board of Directors has been very keen to establish an EHU and the joining of the two areas is regarded as a significant step forward in the organisation's work on closing the gap.



## NATIONAL BEST PRACTICE UNIT VISIT

The National Best Practice Unit (NBPU) is working with the 36 organisations across Australia to have received funding under the Commonwealth's Tackling Indigenous Smoking program and manager of the recently established NBPU, Desley Thompson visited Maari Ma. The NBPU is assisting with access to evidence, tools to help with data collection, measuring outcomes, facilitating networks and training.

*Desley Thompson ( on the left) is pictured with Manager Community Engagement, Kaylene Kemp, who is managing Maari Ma's program.*



## PARTNERSHIP WITH CLONTARF

Maari Ma has entered into a formal partnership with the Clontarf Foundation which has opened a new academy in Broken Hill - at Broken Hill High School. Clontarf academies aim to support Aboriginal boys in improving their academic, sporting and attendance outcomes and 53 boys at Broken Hill High School are eligible to be part of the program. Under the agreement Maari Ma staff will be encouraged to

participate in activities with Clontarf students and an annual program to celebrate achievements, employment pathways and workplace visits will be developed. The Foundation will provide opportunities for Maari Ma staff to interact with Clontarf academies and participants, including participation in academy activities. Maari Ma is very much looking forward to supporting the academy in Broken Hill.



## DEVELOPING A SCREENING TOOL FOR DEPRESSION



*Manager Chronic Disease, David Doyle, was a key driver of the study conducted at Maari Ma. Currently there is no culturally meaningful, appropriately valid, simple, free to use tool to screen for depression in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people attending primary health care in Australia.*

Maari Ma has been taking part in a national study which aims to validate a culturally appropriate, free to use, depression screening tool for use with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people attending primary health care services. The voluntary 'Getting It Right' study was conducted at Maari Ma's Primary Health Care Service over nine months, and 50 people were recruited for the questionnaires and interview. The cross sectional study is an initiative of the Kanyini Vascular Collaboration which is working with approximately 10 primary health care services to recruit 500 Indigenous attendees to primary health care services.

## CONGRATULATIONS TAMARA

Five years of study while bringing up five children has paid off for Tamara Jones who last year completed her Bachelor of Midwifery through Southern Cross University and this year completed her graduate year with the Broken Hill Midwifery Group Practice. Tamara said it was worth every minute and she loves being a midwife. Maari Ma is very proud of its workforce and actively encourages workforce development. In the 2014-2015, year 75% of Indigenous staff and 70 % of all staff were studying towards a formal qualification through a registered training organisation.

*There are approximately 20 pregnant women in Broken Hill and Wilcannia at any one time under the care of Maari Ma's Aboriginal Maternal Infant Health Strategy (AMIHS) team which includes Community Midwives, Tamara Jones and Bryn Stables, and Primary Health Practitioners, Stevie Kemp and Tamee Tester.*



*Tamara Jones is one of two community midwives working at Maari Ma.*



## POLYNESIAN DANCE CLASSES AT WINGS



The children at WINGS at Wilcannia always have lots of variety with their after school and school holiday activities and a Polynesian Dance Class has now been added to the list. William Mafi from the Central School holds classes twice a week and the kids have been learning different dances from countries such as Hawaii, New Zealand and Tonga. They performed at the Central School this year for Harmony Day which celebrates Australia's cultural diversity.



## COMMUNITY DINNERS GOING STRONG FOR 10 YEARS



Wilcannia's Community Dinners continue to be popular 10 years on from the day they started. The first get together at the Wilcannia Community Hall was held in April 2006 and they have been held eight times every year since with community members and Maari staff working together. As well as providing a healthy two course meal and fostering the town's sense of community, they encourage the development of social networks, increase companionship, friendship, and provide a unique forum for health promotion and the development of cooking skills. Happy 10<sup>th</sup> birthday Wilcannia Community Dinners.



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