

## VISITING SPECIALISTS MAKING A DIFFERENCE



Left – right: Dr Albert Hsieh and Professor Stephen Twigg from Royal Prince Alfred Hospital are pictured with Melissa Toomey and her daughter Naleesha during a multi disciplinary endocrinology clinic in Broken Hill. *“The OVHS Endo team have been wonderful for me and really put my mind at ease. They have also been great for my kids who need me to be healthy”* Melissa Toomey.

Maari Ma has built strong links with Royal Prince Alfred Hospital in Sydney over many years and every three months a visiting multi disciplinary endocrinology team visits the far west to see clients as part of the Outback Vascular Health Service. On their last visit, Professor, Stephen Twigg and Dr Albert Hsieh together with RPA Manager of Diabetes Centre, Marg McGill and Podiatrist, Georgina Frank had a busy time seeing clients in Broken Hill and three remote towns. Professor Twigg conducted clinics in Wilcannia and Broken Hill while Dr Hsieh took to the outback roads with a trip to Ivanhoe and Menindee. The quarterly visits mean clients don't need to travel to capital cities to get the best care possible and they have the continuity of the same specialist team every three months. Staff also benefit from regular education and during hand-over. Maari Ma has a host of other visiting medical specialists seeing clients and conducts around 250 individual specialist clinic days each year.

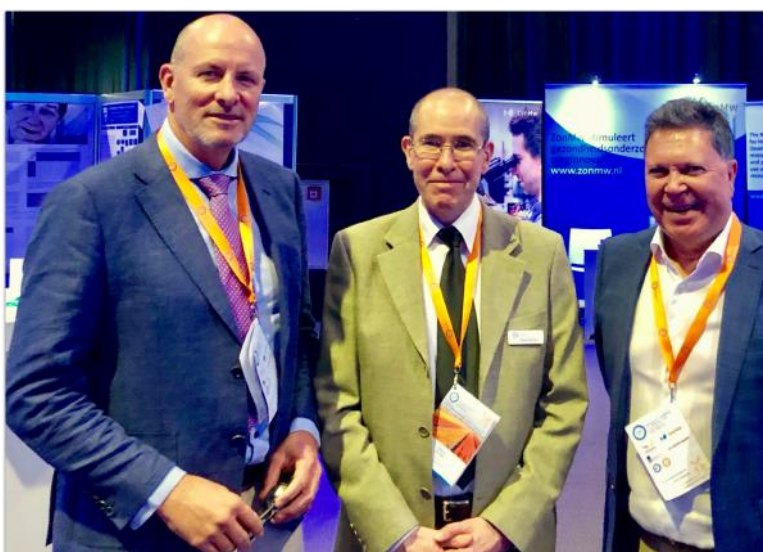
MAARI MA HEALTH  
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# OUTBACK INITIATIVES IMPRESS INTERNATIONAL AUDIENCE



*Maari Ma CEO, Bob Davis, was honoured to co-present a paper at the 18th International Conference on Integrated Care in the Netherlands on boosting access and primary health care performance for Indigenous communities in rural and remote New South Wales and Queensland.*



*Left: CEO of Western Queensland Primary Health Network, Stuart Gordon and Maari Ma CEO, Bob Davis are pictured with Dr Albert Alonso, Chair of the International Foundation for Integrated Care Executive Committee. Dr Alonso took a very keen interest in Aboriginal health in Australia.*

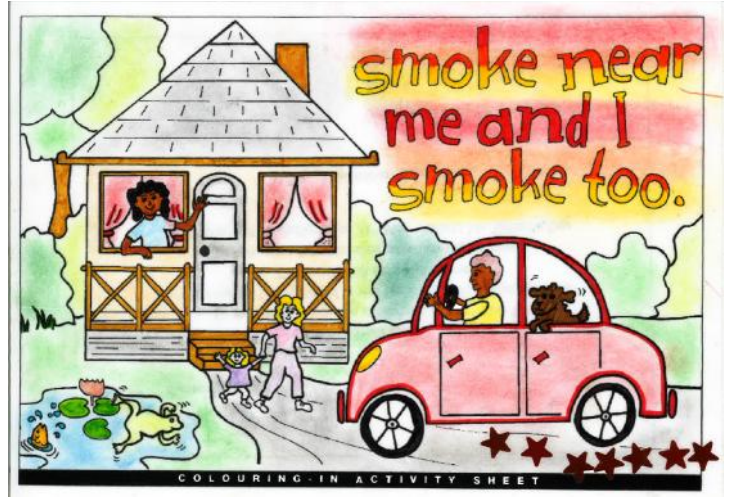
## QIC ACCREDITATION

Two external reviewers from the Quality Improvement Council (QIC) were in Broken Hill and Wilcannia from 28th—31st May to assess Maari Ma for QIC accreditation. The reviewers were assessing whether the organisation meets the 18 QIC Health and Community Service standards regarding a quality organisation, quality services and quality external relationships. They interviewed 30 people including Board members, the CEO, staff, managers, clients and four other external stakeholders representing some of Maari Ma's funding bodies. They also toured the facilities in Broken Hill and Wilcannia. At their departing feedback session, the reviewers said it had been a privilege to spend time at Maari Ma and that a number of external stakeholders had mentioned to them that they were 'leaders in the far west'. Maari Ma first achieved QIC accreditation, which is conducted every three years, in 2012 and the organisation has now been informed that accreditation has been achieved once again for another three years.



# ENGAGING THE NEXT GENERATION ON WORLD NO TOBACCO DAY

Maari Ma's Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) team arranged a variety of activities for both the Broken Hill and Wilcannia communities for World No Tobacco Day on 31<sup>st</sup> May. In the lead up to WNTD, the TIS team invited community members to enrol in the "Quit for Heart Challenge" during the month of May. Each person who enrolled in the challenge was referred to Maari Ma's Smokers' Program and those who actively engaged to manage their tobacco smoking were eligible for a hamper. In addition children and youth in the community were invited to participate in a colouring in or painting competition for under 12 years and 12 -25 years respectively with the winners announced on WNTD. On the day, community members were invited to both Broken Hill and Wilcannia Primary Health Care Services where they could talk to the TIS team as well as Aboriginal health practitioners about tobacco smoking, health risks and treatment options, and there was also the opportunity to have carbon monoxide and blood pressure screening.



*Each year Maari Ma joins the annual WNTD campaign to highlight the health risks associated with tobacco use and this year focused on educating children to discourage the uptake of smoking. Maari Ma promoted all of May as the smoke free month, and conducted colouring in and painting competitions for children and young adults.*

## WALKING THE TALK - STAFF ROLL UP SLEEVES FOR FLU VACCINATIONS

Maari Ma staff have proved they are good role models for their clients by rolling up their sleeves for the influenza vaccination this year. With another flu season on its way, staff understand the importance of vaccinations. The flu is highly contagious and is passed on through infected droplets from coughs or sneezes. Staff not only need to protect themselves – they need to protect their clients too. As well as being vaccinated clinic and community staff have completed the Hand Hygiene Australia online training session as a refresher on minimising the spread of infection. This information is also being shared to clients as they pass through the triage and treatment room. A couple of after hours clinics have also been held to make getting a vaccination more convenient for both staff and clients and while stocks ran low for a short time, the vaccination fridge is full once again.



*Aboriginal Health Practitioner, Sam Hooker, puts on a brave face for his vaccination given by Practice Nurse, Rebecca Conti.*

# TRAINEES IN HEALTHY START



In recognition of the importance Maari Ma places on getting children off to the best possible start in life, two new trainee positions have been created in the Healthy Start team. The Healthy Start team consists of Aboriginal health practitioners, midwives and child and family health nurses and is designed to improve the health of pregnant women, newborn babies, children 0-8 years and their families. Erin Vale & Mele Tuipulotu are receiving on the job training as well as doing formal study to become allied health assistants.

*Pictured from left: Mele Tuipulotu and Erin Vale have started in the new positions of trainee allied health assistants.*

*"Health has always been an area I wanted to work in and being able to help people in my community is a passion I've always had" Mele Tuipulotu.*

*"Last year I undertook some study to get myself ready for work, and finally applied for my first job as a trainee allied health assistant at Maari Ma. Being able to work at Maari Ma is a privilege and I couldn't be any happier or more passionate in the job I will do". Erin Vale.*

## PROMOTING DIET AND NUTRITION

Maari Ma's nutrition program works towards improving the nutritional health and knowledge of our communities and dietitians work within community schools, preschools and with Healthy Start in promoting diet and nutrition. Children are exposed to fruit and vegetables they may not have tried before and strategies are used to increase food range and tackle fussy eating. The kids are always pleased to see Maari Ma's dietitians and look forward to what's in store for their cooking classes.



*The Kids at St Theresa's Community School at Wilcannia learnt some of the benefits of including vegetables in their diet every day such as maintaining a healthy weight, reducing the risk of chronic diseases like diabetes, cancer and stroke/heart attack, and also keeping their guts healthy and regular. They also tried two new ingredients - hommus and alfalfa sprouts.*



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