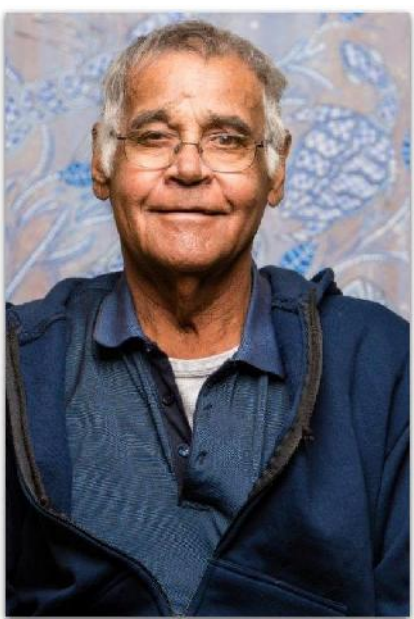


A LIFE HONoured AND REMEMBERED



Maari Ma’s Board of Directors and staff have honoured the life of William Bates and the significant contribution he made to Indigenous health, housing, land rights and freedoms. Mr Bates, a Wanyuparaku/Malangapa/Barkantji elder from Wilcannia, passed away on September 25th. Mr Bates was Maari Ma’s founding Chairperson more than 20 years ago and had rejoined the Board in 2010 to champion the health and well being of Maari Ma’s communities – particularly the community of his home town. He is remembered as a tireless worker who was committed to the communities and the region. Mr Bates, as one of the original councillors on the New South Wales Land Council, was honoured at its 40th anniversary as one of the state’s true land rights legends. Sadly he passed just a few days before the gala event but his legacy will live on, not least at Maari Ma – the organisation he presided over at its establishment.

William Bates: Founding Chairperson and Director of Maari Ma Health Aboriginal Corporation, Chairperson of the Murdi Paaki Regional Enterprise Corporation, Director of the Murdi Paaki Regional Housing Corporation Ltd, Chairperson of the Mutawintji National Park Board of Management, Chairperson of the Mutawintji Local Aboriginal Land Council, Aboriginal Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) Councillor of the Murdi Paaki region and a strong advocate for the current Murdi Paaki Regional Assembly as long time representative and Chair of the Wilcannia Community Working Party.

MINISTERIAL RECOGNITION OF CHRONIC DISEASE STRATEGY



An evaluation of a strategy Maari Ma implemented ten years ago to combat chronic disease was launched on 18th August in Broken Hill by the Federal Minister for Indigenous Health, Hon. Ken Wyatt AM MP. The development of Maari Ma’s Chronic Disease Strategy in 2005 was the result of a Board directive to find a path that would bring about a shift in health outcomes for Aboriginal people. It was a new way of providing primary care services to the Aboriginal people in far west NSW, re-aligning service delivery to prevent the chronic diseases that were cutting Aboriginal lives short, detecting those diseases earlier and managing them better. The Chronic Disease Strategy Evaluation Report, called *Opening Doors* was a collaboration between Maari Ma and the Menzies School of Health Research in Darwin. The two volume report documents key achievements during the Chronic Disease Strategy’s implementation, and priorities for further work in the Strategy’s key program

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CHRONIC DISEASE STRATEGY EVALUATION

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areas of Healthy Start (for mothers, babies and children), Keeping Well (for adults), and health service support. It tracks the evolution of the Strategy from the early days of community engagement and service redesign to the implementation and growth of the Healthy Start and Keeping Well programs. It also tracks the use of quality improvement processes to document changes in clinical outcomes for clients. Importantly, the evaluation showed the Strategy having an impact with downward trending graphs of potentially preventable hospitalisations for Aboriginal people for chronic conditions.

Federal Minister for Indigenous Health, Ken Wyatt AM MP launched the Strategy's evaluation and is pictured right with Board Directors, Cheryl Blore from Menindee (left) and Fay Johnstone from Ivanhoe (right). The Strategy was a Board directive in 2005.

The Minister also launched the Western New South Wales Primary Health Network's Cultural Safety Framework.



(Left to right) Maari Ma CEO, Bob Davis is pictured with some of the pivotal people involved with the Strategy in its early days — former CEO William 'Smiley' Johnstone, Maari Ma Director Medical Services, Dr Hugh Burke, GP Dr Vic Carroll and former CEO now Healing Foundation CEO, Richard Weston. All staff who have worked for Maari Ma during the past ten years were acknowledged at the launch as contributing to the success of the Chronic Disease Strategy implementation. It was a proud day for all at Maari Ma.

Some of the highlights from the evaluation include:

- More than a 10 fold increase in the number of health checks undertaken from 2011 to 2015
- Doubling of the number of home medication reviews undertaken from 2012 to 2015
- Significant rise in the number of booked appointments (versus walk-in appointments) to provide planned chronic disease care and management
- Steady increase in women presenting for 5 or more antenatal visits since 2007
- Substantial growth in specialist clinics held in the primary care setting: from less than 100 in 2010 to almost 1000 in 2015, in Broken Hill, Menindee, Wilcannia and Ivanhoe. Visiting specialties include cardiology, nephrology, endocrinology, smoking cessation, echo technician, addiction physician, pain management, physiotherapy, paediatrics, psychiatry, and ear, nose and throat surgery.
- Child oral health services have seen the percentage of Aboriginal children with decay in baby teeth and permanent teeth decline from 2007 to 2011 in most towns and the average number of decayed, missing and filled baby teeth and permanent teeth decline in most towns.

MAARI MA RECEIVES NATIONAL HR AWARD



Maari Ma received a Highly Commended award in the category Employer of Choice (Public Sector & NFP) at the Australian HR Awards 2017. It was the second consecutive year that Maari Ma was a finalist in the awards which recognise the individuals and organisations at the forefront of excellence and best practice in people management in Australia. Maari Ma's Highly Commended acknowledgement was projected on to three large screens at the awards event attended by nearly 900 people from across Australia. Congratulations to all staff at Maari Ma. The Australian HR Awards are the highlight event on the human resources industry calendar bringing together industry leaders to celebrate excellence in the HR profession and recognise individuals, teams and companies for their outstanding achievements in people management.

TRANSPORT RECOGNITION

Congratulations to Maari Ma Community Transport Officer at Menindee, Carmel King, who was an award winner at the Far West Local Health District Health Innovation Awards 2017. Carmel was awarded a Certificate of Recognition for Staff Excellence in the consumer recognition category. Menindee Health Service was also an award winner.

Maari Ma's Patient Transport team is an essential link in Maari Ma's delivery of health care. In 2016/2017 there were nearly 15 thousand transport occasions across the Maari Ma region.



INTERNATIONAL DAY OF WORLD'S INDIGENOUS PEOPLES



International Day of the World's Indigenous Peoples was celebrated at Maari Ma by inviting HIPPY (Home Interaction Program for Parents and Youngsters) families to the Child and Family Building for a roast lunch and a screening of a series of Maari Ma produced Human Rights Agenda films. Manager Community Services and Programs, Justin Files lead the event and addressed the group on the significance of the human rights movement to Indigenous people. Healthy Start promotions were also available and Board Chair, Maureen O'Donnell did the Welcome to Country.

Ten years ago, on 13 September 2007, the General Assembly adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, a major milestone with respect to the cooperation and solidarity between Indigenous peoples and Member States.

NAIDOC FAMILY FUN DAY



While Broken Hill organisations celebrated NAIDOC in July the traditional community NAIDOC Family Fun Day in the Park was deferred to September 29th to take advantage of warmer weather. Moving the date paid off and big crowds turned out to enjoy the day of activities which included traditional food, music, dance, stalls, face-painting, a merry-go-round, a jumping castle and karaoke. There was also free transport to the park. Maari Ma had a number of stalls providing information, there were activities for the children and the popular smoothie bike was kept busy all day making healthy fruit smoothies. NAIDOC Family Fun Day in the Park is always a popular and well supported event on Broken Hill's social calendar and this year was no exception. Maari Ma congratulates the NAIDOC organising committee.

CONNECTING REGULARLY AND MEANINGFULLY



RUOK?

Maari Ma Primary Mental Health Workers Taylor Westley (pictured) and Jenny Walters joined Year 10 students at Broken Hill High School on September 14th to raise awareness of the suicide prevention campaign R U OK. The students had organised the event to remind their school mates to ask family and friends the question "R U OK ?" in a meaningful way, because connecting regularly and meaningfully is one thing everyone can do to make a difference to anyone who might be struggling. Maari Ma set up an information table and the students were able to take away resources while having conversations with Taylor and Jenny around keeping well and connecting regularly.



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