



# ANNUAL REPORT 2019





## LESLEY AHSEE

WACHS would like to honour the passing of Lesley Ah See this year by having one of her paintings as the front and back cover of our 2019 Annual Report.

Lesley was the first Wiradjuri Woman to receive a Heart Transplant after having complications with her heart spanning several years. Lesley put measures in place to get herself healthy in anticipation of a transplant and started back doing what she loved most, her painting.

This painting is about her journey, as there are 5 hearts. One heart is smoking with headstones, one heart inflated from drinking, one heart with the left ventricle assist device which was keeping her alive and the heart with the hands around it represents the transplant heart in the professors hands.

Lesley's painting was donated to St Vincent's Hospital in Sydney where it is currently on display in the Heart and Lung unit on Level 4.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

We acknowledge and respect the traditional lands of all Aboriginal people, we respect all Elders past, present & future. We ask all people that walk, work & live on traditional Aboriginal lands to be respectful of culture & traditions and work together as one to better Aboriginal Health.

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## About WACHS

Wellington Aboriginal Corporation Health Service (WACHS) is on the land of the Wiradjuri people.

WACHS is an Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation which has been running for over 25 years, located in the town of Wellington. Wellington is a small rural community with a shire population of approximately 8,831 people of which 1,897 are Aboriginal (2016 Census Stats).

WACHS offer professional, holistic health care to enhance the health and emotional wellbeing of the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities in Wellington and surrounding districts including Dubbo, Moree, North West and Far West Regions of NSW and Greater Western Sydney covering Mt Druitt, Penrith, Nepean and Blue Mountains.

Our services continue to expand with new programs, staff and clinics coming onboard and our expansive range of specialist programs provided by staff from WACHS or through partnership links with visiting services continues to grow providing our communities with the best possible health care options available.

WACHS is governed by a Board of Directors which consists of seven Aboriginal community members and the two recently added board positions for specialist non member directors. These are elected annually by the Community. The Board of Directors provides the strategic direction of the organisation and works in close consultation with the Chief Executive Officer to ensure that organisational, community and funding outcomes are being achieved in line with our Strategic Plan.

WACHS employs 130 staff including Visiting Specialists across all service locations.

## WACHS Locations



## WACHS Vision

WACHS is acknowledged and respected as an organisation of excellence which is demonstrated by a healthier Aboriginal community.

## WACHS Mission Statement

To advocate for and facilitate the achievement and maintenance of health outcomes consistent with Aboriginal peoples' evolving notion of cultural well being.

## Purpose

WACHS plans, delivers, co-ordinates and advocates for effective clinic and community-based primary health care services to the Aboriginal community.

## WACHS Objectives

- a. Provide culturally appropriate primary health care service for Aboriginal people and the wider community within the Wellington shire.
- b. Administer and operate an Aboriginal Medical Service within the legal framework, funding agreements and the capacity of WACHS.
- c. Enhance the health status of the Aboriginal community in Wellington shire including, Nanima Reserve.
- d. Involve Aboriginal people in the planning and provision of primary health care services.
- e. Provide professional development for our Aboriginal Board and staff to support their roles and responsibilities within WACHS.
- f. Support and assist Aboriginal people to better utilise existing holistic health care services.



WACHS  
BOARD  
2019

# CHAIR REPORT

CHAIRPERSON



Marsha Hill

SECRETARY



Philippe Bell

TREASURER



Graham Blackhall

**As Chair of the Board of Directors for the Wellington Aboriginal Corporation Health Service and on behalf of the board, it is my pleasure to present the 2019 Annual Report.**

Our organisation is 27 years strong, reminding us all what has been a long and proud history servicing Wellington, Dubbo, Moree and surrounding communities along with our work in Western Sydney at Mt Druitt and Penrith.

The commitment, passion and professionalism of our Staff who work tirelessly to provide health care facilities and support through our programs for our clients, we can't thank them enough for their ongoing support.

Our CEO, Darren Ah See who has taken us from strength to strength and continually strives to improve the positive outcomes for the organisation, we are very grateful for the time and effort you put into your role.

Our Executive Management are key to supporting Darren and our staff to continue our growth and organisation strategic direction.

The organisation is constantly improving the health and wellbeing of our communities and our achievements and growth are a testament to our staff through continued training and study. The Board recognises the efforts put into gaining these qualifications and that they will be able to use these in the workplace to better our operations.

The WACHS Board has recently advertised for two new specialist Directors to sit on the board and we hope to have this finalised by the end of the year. This is in line with the constitutional changes to membership and was passed by our members.



Our GWAHS team have been busy renovating our Mt Druitt Clinic, which looks amazing and assists the team to be able to provide more health care services in this location. Our ANFPP Team have settled into their new premises in Mt Druitt as well and are continually taking on board new clients into their program.

Our Penrith Clinic has been up and running for several months now and hoping to expand their operation with more Doctors and staff planned for the new year.

A new location has been chosen for our first Blue Mountains operation which will house the Healthy for Life program.

The Moree Aboriginal Residential Rehabilitation Service team have been producing great results and outcomes this year with the growth of our services provided.

I would like to recognise Adam Ryan who was a previous board member of WACHS and loved the organisation so much he now works for us!! Adam has been part of our board for the past 4 years and we would like to thank him for his efforts during this time to assist us with our growth and expansion.

We are all looking forward to 2020 and working with our new Directors to continue the outstanding health services to our local community and Western Sydney.

Regards

*Marsha Hill*  
Chairperson

PUBLIC OFFICER



Linda Baxter

DIRECTOR



John Ah See

DIRECTOR



Glenda Bell

DIRECTOR



Adam Ryan



# EXECUTIVE TEAM 2019



# CEO REPORT

WACHS has continued to work towards achieving our priorities in 2019 as part of our Strategic Plan that will take us through to 2020.

2019 saw WACHS continue our expansion of comprehensive primary health care throughout Wellington, Dubbo, Moree and Western Sydney. This year we have achieved the opening of our new Penrith clinic, refurbished our Mt Druitt Clinic in two weeks over the Easter and ANZAC Holiday period and expanded our ANFPP GWAHS team whilst moving into our new Luxford Road premises in Mt Druitt.

Our Wellington Clinic has also received a facelift with new reception artwork reflecting our local community and heritage. WACHS have continued to have positive outcomes this year and this has been thanks to our committed and dedicated staff who have consistently raised the bar on our services and programs being offered to our communities. WACHS continues to offer dedicated training internally and externally to assist the staff gain the knowledge required to perform their day to day roles.

We have recently added two additional positions to the Executive Team structure and I am looking forward to seeing our operations expand in the forthcoming year with the assistance of these new roles.

Thanks goes to my existing Executive Team members who again have been an integral part of the growth we have experienced and assisted with the many achievements completed in the past year. My role is reliant on us all working as a team to achieve the desired outcomes for WACHS and I could not achieve in my position without their continued support.

Marsha and our Board Members have put a lot of time and effort into our strategic direction and planning this year and our board expansion which will see two new specialised directors added to our current board. This will add more experience and knowledge to our existing structure.

Partnerships and key stakeholders are vital for WACHS to exist and operate and we have continued to grow these in 2019. We acknowledge the support of our partners from government and non-government and the private sector.

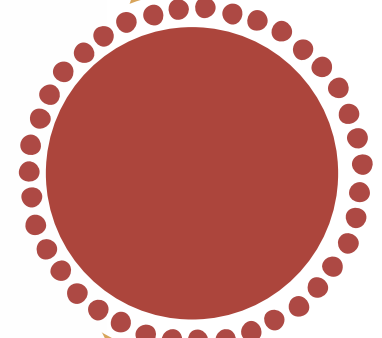
We will continue our journey to provide the best possible health services and cultural awareness through our programs to the communities we service and I am excited see what we can achieve in the coming year.

Regards  
*Darren Ah See*  
CEO

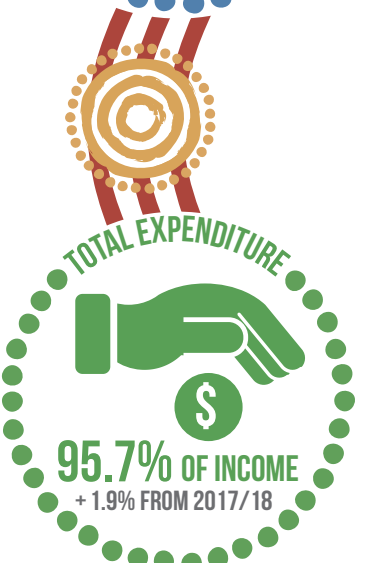
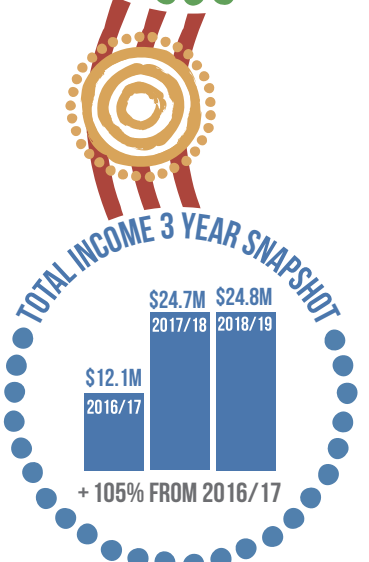
## STRATEGIC PLAN

In acknowledgement of Wellington Aboriginal Corporation Health Service's (WACHS) development and growth over the past 3 years, the Strategic Plan 2017-2020 is focused on consolidating the current strengths of the organisation as well as driving further achievements over the next few years.

-  Deliver client-centred services that prioritise wellness and holistic care
-  Adopt and implement models of care that deliver value
-  Collaborate to improve population outcomes
-  Innovate for sustainability







# FINANCE REPORT

### Program purpose

To develop, implement and manage the corporation's financial management systems including payroll services

### Aim of program

To provide sound financial management of the Corporation including:

- Maintaining appropriate systems and structures to record, explain and analyse financial transactions
- To implement financial systems and targets that promote sustainability (including liquidity, self-generated income, and net asset targets)
- To support organisational growth through sound financial management strategies
- Monitoring the application and condition of the Corporation's assets

### Outcomes of program

The Corporation recorded a surplus of \$1,055,081. Surplus funds are set aside for future investment, including asset replacement and other capital improvements.

In 2019, the Corporation set aside \$500,000 from retained earnings to support one-off capital projects and acquisitions. These funds were in addition to our ongoing asset management allocations to motor vehicles and IT infrastructure. Just over \$300,000 in capital works/items were approved under this internal allocation.



The audited financial statements confirm the following highlights:

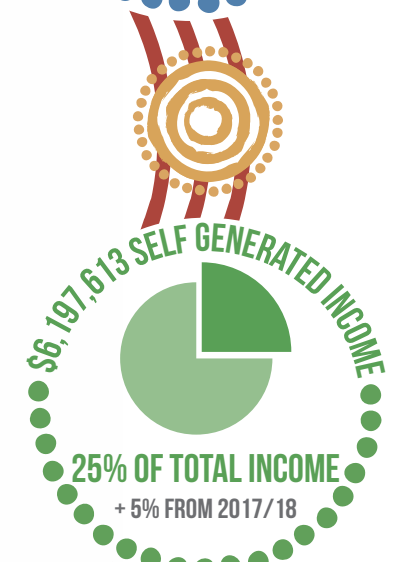
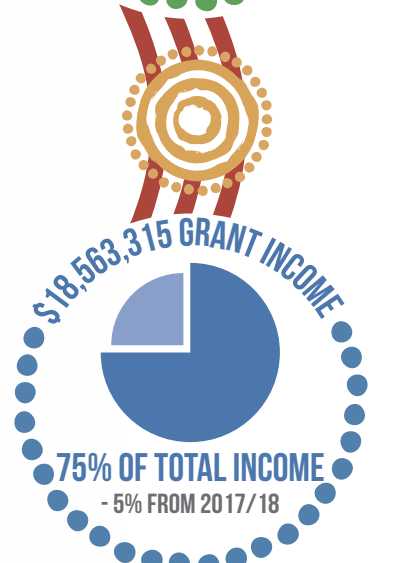
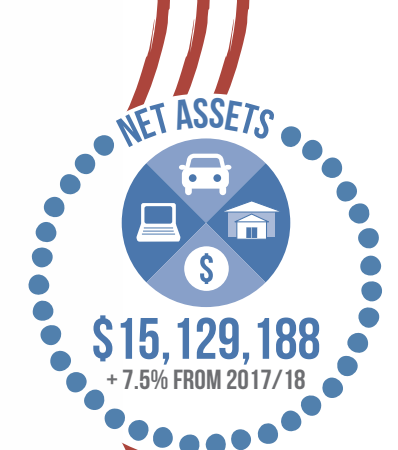
Total all source income of \$24,760,928. All source income has more than doubled over the last four years (\$12,273,370 in 2015)

Total expenses represented 95.74% of all source income.

Current ratio: For every \$1 in current liabilities, the Corporation has \$3.67 in current assets. This compares to \$3.06 in 2018. The current ratio remains well above the minimum target (\$2 in current assets every \$1 in current liabilities), and will be maintained above the target during the current expansionary phase.

Net Assets: The corporation have net assets of \$15,129,188, compared with \$14,074,107 in 2018.

The Corporation is in a strong financial position.







# WELLINGTON CLINIC

## Program purpose

WACHS plans, delivers, co-ordinates and advocates for effective clinic and community-based primary health care services to the Aboriginal community.

The clinic provides care in the way of GP services, primary clinical care by Nurses, Aboriginal Health Practitioners and visiting specialist services such as Podiatry, Diabetes Education and counselling services.

Our reception and transport staff are vital to the daily operations of a smooth running clinic.

## Aim of program

- To have a healthier community by providing services that can be accessed easily by the Aboriginal and wider community of Wellington.
- Increase services at the clinic to reduce the burden of patients having to travel and costs associated with specialist care.
- Increase the accessibility to specialist care for patients and their families.

## Outcomes of program

Cardiologist Doctor Katrina Adorini started visiting last November and has seen 56 patients since starting. Dr Adorini visits every 2nd month for 2 days and we feel very privileged to have her expertise available at our clinic.

Orange Mental Health have been supporting WACHS clients with access to psychiatrist via telehealth once a fortnight.

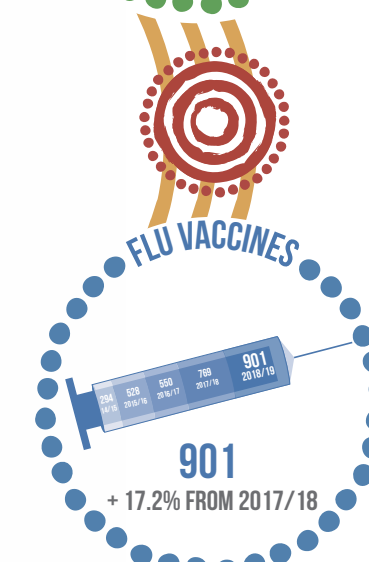
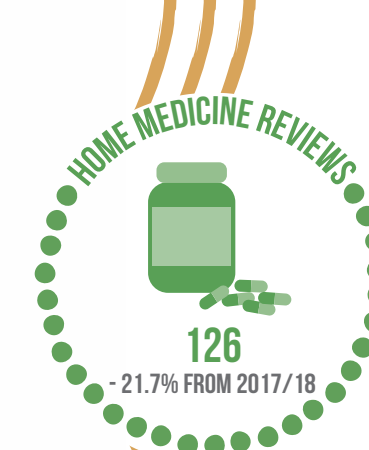


This year we passed accreditation with AGPAL and QIP which will be in effect for another 3 years.

A face lift at the clinic has been completed to make it more culturally appropriate and welcoming. Local Artist Douglas Ah-See was kind enough to donate graphic images which were developed into wall art for the reception area.

The clinic corridor now displays photos of Board, staff and community members with more to come in near future.

Telehealth use is increasing daily, making specialist care more accessible for patients. Patients can be seen at WACHS via telehealth with no cost and no need to travel.





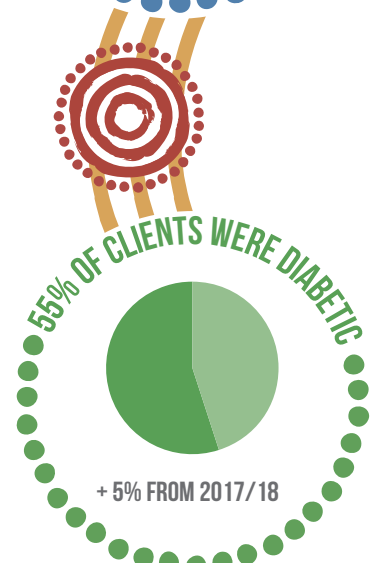


### Podiatry

Since 2012 Sreenathudu Arshanapalli (Sam) has provided visiting podiatry services at WACHS. This podiatry service provides a localised service reducing access issues. This service includes provision of general nail care and chronic foot care, hygiene and diabetic foot assessments.

Primary prevention and regular checks (at least 2 per year) will help delay or may even prevent foot care problems. This service focuses on patient education and foot assessments. This has been associated with fewer complications and improved treatment outcomes for patients and dramatically reduces impacts on acute services, individuals, families and possible hospitalisations.

Sam ensures the Clinic team is updated with any treatment follow-up.



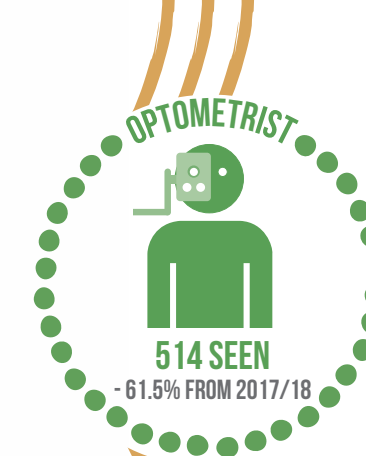
### Regional Eye Health Program

Our regional Eye Health Coordinator works with the Brien Holden Vision Institute to facilitate local and regional clinics which provide eye health screening and optometry services.

Clinics are bulk billed through Medicare and glasses are provided free of charge to eligible patients through the NSW Government's Vision Australia Spectacle Program or Brien Holden Vision Low Cost Spectacle program.

If patients require Ophthalmology services the Optometrist will refer them to the Outback Eye Service or the Dubbo Public Ophthalmology Clinic.

This year has been another successful year with clinics held in Wellington, Gilgandra, Gularganbone, Baradine, Coonabarabran, Warren, Nyngan, Trangie and Narromine. We also held clinics at Schools and Preschools.







# HEALTHY FOR LIFE WELLINGTON

### Aim of program

To improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mothers, babies and children, enhance the quality of life for people with a chronic condition and, over time, reduce the incidence of adult chronic disease.

### Objectives of program

- Improve chronic disease care by prevention, early detection and management of chronic disease
- Improve the availability and quality of child and maternal health services.

### Outcomes of program

WACHS has a dedicated team of four Aboriginal Health Practitioners (AHP) as part of Healthy for Life that support safe and culturally appropriate holistic services to our community.

Our AHPs have individual portfolios ranging from Antenatal Clinics (conducted at Swift Street Medical Service), Youth Health, Women's Health, Exercise groups, Dubbo Liver Clinic support and Regional Eye Health program.

This year our team has conducted Health assessments at Nanima and Wellington DET Preschool. These assessments provide evidence to support internal referral to New Directions.

The Healthy for Life team was also part of the following community events:

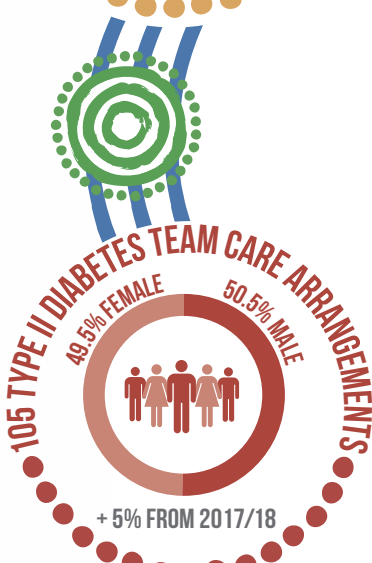
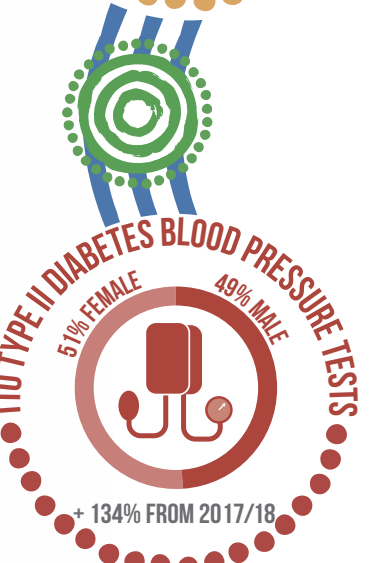
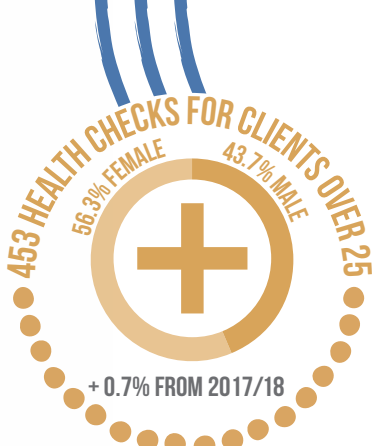
- Close the Gap Day at Wellington Correctional Centre – Education and information given to participants regarding services in Wellington and surrounding communities
- NSW Aboriginal Football Knockout 2018 – Healthy for Life



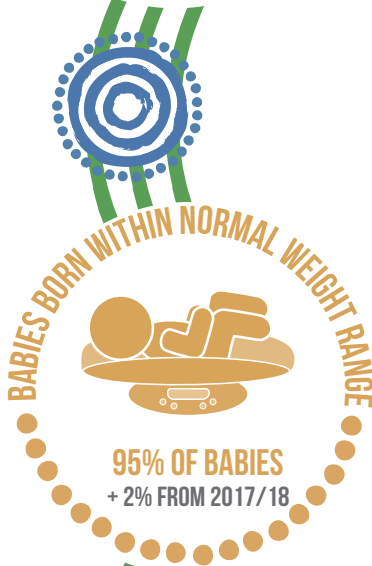
- supported the Quit B Fit team and provided promotional information packages to participants
- Bowel Cancer Awareness and Donate Life – In collaboration with the Wellington Cowboys, the H4L Team assisted with promotion of the day through short videos, local media stories (Wellington Times) and attended games with ambassadors to share messages and participate in registrations
  - NSW Breast Screen – H4L partnered to ensure Aboriginal Women had breast screens conducted. This service was well supported by the local community

As part of our H4L team Trish Thorne, Maternal Child Health Nurse, plays an integral part supporting mothers and children providing education, monitoring and support. The importance of this position can be seen with an increase in children 12-24 months now being fully immunised.

Kacee Ryan, Aboriginal Community Support Worker, ensures a culturally safe environment supporting Trish and providing further education and advice to parents.







# NEW DIRECTIONS WELLINGTON

## Aim of program

The Program is a child and maternal health care program that supports Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and early childhood development to ensure children are ready to learn when they start school through providing access to services in five priority areas:

1. Antenatal care and postnatal care
2. Standard information about baby care
3. Practical advice and assistance with breastfeeding, nutrition and parenting
4. Monitoring of developmental milestones, immunisation status and infections; and health checks and referrals to treatment for Indigenous children before starting school

## Objectives of program

The objective of the Program is to provide Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and their families' access to child and maternal health services. The Program seeks to give Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families and their babies access to high quality health care services in urban, rural and remote locations across Australia with the intended outcome of helping to close the gap in life expectancy within a generation (by 2031) and to halve the gap in mortality rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait children under five.

## Outcomes of program

### Occupational Therapy

Throughout 2018-2019 our Occupational Therapist (OT) has partnered with local Preschools. This has involved a

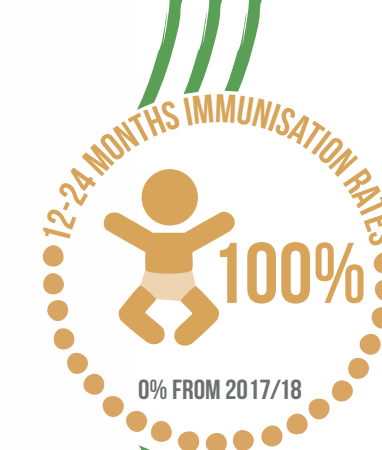


combination of interventions on the floor in collaboration with teaching staff and group work. Our OT has worked as part of the program provided by the teachers supporting identified children and Developmental Screening has also been provided as part of WACHS Health Checks.

Regular twice weekly groups at Nanima Preschool have been provided covering the children aged 3 – 5 years of age and the themes of groups have varied as needs have been identified, such as social skills.

2019 groups have focussed on Music and Mindfulness. This theme was decided on after collaboration with teaching staff. There is evidence for the promotion of brain growth and development through the use of music, rhythm and movement as well as learning mindfulness techniques that are developmentally age appropriate. Our OT also observed an improvement in concentration and rhythm, with the majority of children in the group being fully engaged in the activities. Our OT along with teaching staff made adjustments to the program as the needs of the group shifted. Music and Mindfulness has continued for the preschool year at Nanima due to the positive benefits seen by teaching staff and the OT.

Wellington Public School Preschool also had the Music and Mindfulness groups for the children for Term 1, with an average attendance of 22 children. Term 3 was a pre-scissors skills group and a weaving group. Local Aboriginal Artist Tjanara Talbot, ran a weaving group which was aimed at improving fine motor, motor planning, concentration and Indigenous cultural skills. The group was run for 7 weeks.







Our OT was a co-therapist for speech and language groups run by our Speech Pathologist at Nanima for the 3-4 year old class.

We also partnered with Communities for Children to deliver Circle of Security Parenting group. These groups resulted in the formation of friendships and extension of a sense of community for a number of parents. Attendance was regular and if parents could not attend they diligently attended catch up sessions individually with either facilitators in order to maintain their place in the group. Parents reported outcomes such as improved relationships with their children, increased confidence in their parenting capacity and a different lens through which to see their children. Two more groups are planned for the end of 2019.

Our OT provided consultation to ANFPP regarding possible developmental delay in their Wellington clients. Consultation and attendance at Barnados Playgroups and Community Fun Days, as well as other Community Events such as Easter in the Park, NAIDOC at Nanima, Mumbil Fun Days.

**Speech Pathology**

Our Speech Pathologist increased group therapy at three local preschools this year.

Mindfulness group time was held for half an hour, two times a week during the term at both Nanima (20 students) and Wellington Pre-school (20 students).

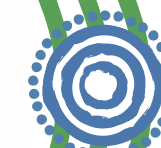
Three children took part in Live, Laugh, Learn, a weekly 30-45 minute social skills program.



**Dietitian**

This role has transitioned from servicing 0-5 year olds and mothers 2 days a week to providing service across all ages in 3 days a week.

We have supported and made recommendations to improve options provided at breakfast club at our local school, facilitated 'Marang Dhali – Eating Well' Nutrition Education and Cooking program to support the local school's program to improve the nutrition quality of lunchboxes.







# SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL WELLBEING TEAM WELLINGTON

## SEWB Team

- Family Violence
- Drug & Alcohol
- Child & Family Project
- Social and Emotional Well Being program

## Program purpose

To provide support and case management for the community in the area's of family violence, child protection, sexual assault, drug and alcohol, transition to school, school retention, family support and social and emotional well being.

## Aim of program

To provide a holistic, culturally appropriate service which will improve the social and emotional wellbeing of Aboriginal community members.

## Objectives of program

To provide case management for clients who access any of the SEWB programs and increase awareness and improve the social inequalities faced by Aboriginal community members.

- Support families in their child's education and successful transition to school. School retention.
- Support Indigenous community members with greater opportunities and access to services to increase their physical, emotional and social wellbeing.
- Increased access to Drug and Alcohol services. Increased awareness of services and supports available for community in relation to drug and alcohol services.



- Increased access and awareness of Family Violence services in the community.

## Outcomes of program

Our Social Emotional Wellbeing team (SEWB) work holistically with community members in addressing issues which have an impact on their mental, physical, social and spiritual health.

The Aboriginal Family Violence Prevention Worker and Local Support Coordinator work together to create a case management position as well as community capacity building. This has worked in favour of both programs as it has allowed community awareness activities to happen without impacting on case management and service delivery in the program.

The Drug and Alcohol program has been limited with staff changes this year but since the commencement of the new staff member in January, we have seen an increase in case management of clients, referrals to D&A counselling, rehabilitation/detox services and delivery of programs to address AOD issues in our community.

The Child and family program has seen some challenges over the past year with staff changes and reallocation of program between Wellington and Dubbo. This program has worked hard at maintaining great partnerships in Wellington with the local schools and services whilst they have been working on developing partnerships within Dubbo and the community. We expect this service to grow in the next couple of years and look forward to what the program can offer for our clients and community.







The Social and Emotional Wellbeing program has seen some great work being delivered in the program with both case management, delivery of culturally appropriate programs and community events. The staff have developed a great case management model working from a trauma informed care framework to assist clients in addressing issues in a culturally safe way.

#### Girls Family Violence Camp

Our team has been building on our interactive program Matong Mundarra – Strong Warrior, by holding a girls camp that aimed to create an environment that is culturally safe for our youth.

The camp provided educational sessions raising awareness and skills development around sexual health, healthy lifestyles, cyber safety, mental health wellbeing, bullying and healthy relationships. The target age was 15 years and 15 ladies are offered positions to attend with support from Health and Safety mentors.

#### Boys Camp

A collaboration across the Social Emotional Wellbeing (SEWB) Teams; Drug and Alcohol and Child and Family Health teams, created a partnership arrangement with WINS and Wellington Police. The program is designed to give young males, aged from 12-18 years, a better understanding of the short and long term effects of Drugs and Alcohol, the importance of education and the effect drugs and alcohol has not only on them but their families and opportunities in life after school.

Outcomes of the program are aligned to the therapeutic processes to build resilience and confidence in our youth and



connect them with support workers and mentors that have the skills and connections to assist them with personal and professional outcomes.

#### River 2 Retention

Our Child and Family Health Program developed and fostered a partnership with Goanna Wood Works and Wellington Primary School to design and deliver a Cultural Program for local youth in year 6.

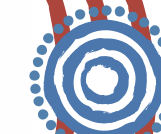
The program builds resilience and confidence in youth and connects them with support workers and mentors that have the skills and connections that support them to stay at school, use cultural practices to connect positively with peers, improve communication skills with mentors and teachers and create resources that reflect family values after a partnership with Wellington High School.

#### Yinaar Healing Circle - Women's Group

This program has been designed to create a culturally safe place for local Aboriginal women to gather and support each other. It has promoted the wellbeing and healing of all participants focusing on their strengths, skills and knowledge. It will also incorporate education and awareness and capacity building in the prevention of family violence, addiction, grief & loss and other social determinants identified by the group.

#### Who's Ya Mob

The program celebrates the reconnecting of our mob to kin and country. The program will be a partnership between WACHS, Wellington Local Aboriginal Lands Council and Wellington Information Neighbourhood Service.







We plan to allow Aboriginal people to not only reconnect with their culture, but to gain and access information on their history. Aiming to improve people's understanding of where they fit in with the history of their people. Understanding your identity is a valuable aspect of personal growth, reaffirming individual's sense of belonging to family and country.

#### Elders Information Days

The event's purpose is to educate Aboriginal Elders in our community aged 55 years and older around the Health services available in Wellington. This is an alternative process to educate and empower seniors and connect them with local services in order to improve their well-being and lifestyle, in a culturally safe way. An activity which elders will enjoy has been included to engage the desired target group. Sessions will include Bingo and Information sessions from local services.

#### Drug Action Week

The struggles of the Drugs and Alcohol within our community are impacting not only on our community but more deeply or families and in particular our children. This program will deliver 'lived experience' workshop in a variety of awareness sessions to educate high school students around alcohol and other drugs.

This program topics presented via the Brothers 4 Recovery workshops will cover (but not limited to) Mental Health, Suicide Prevention, the journey in and out of addiction and wellbeing and where to seek help and aspects associated with addiction.



#### Road Maps

Our Team have formed a working partnership with Lives Lived Well to deliver a program called Roadmaps to enhance the wellbeing of those struggling with Drug or Alcohol addiction. This program is driven by Liveslivedwell but fully supported by our SEWB Team Drug & Alcohol Worker.

Roadmaps is a six week program that provides intensive rehabilitation support which includes individual and group counselling sessions, information and referrals to other support services.

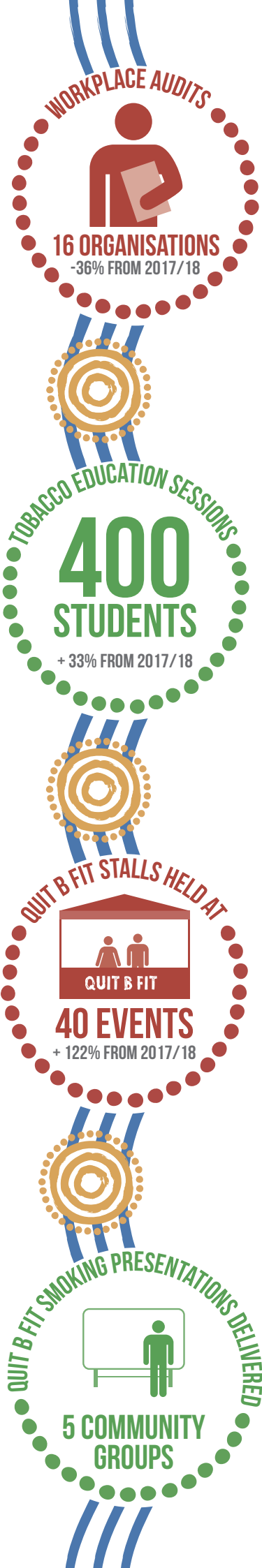
#### Hep C Awareness

Hep C Awareness Day which was delivered in partnership with Dubbo Community Health, Liver Clinic and is a great way to deliver to our community valuable information and awareness around Hepatitis C along with possible treatment options. The event focuses on self-awareness, understanding of Hepatitis C and seeking of support and services available.

#### Mens Group

This program has been designed for the purpose of the social and emotional well-being of our Aboriginal men in the Wellington community. This will be done by interaction between participants through their conversation, as well as through the passing on and the learning of new knowledge particularly that of the Wellington and surrounding districts. The interaction and education of the younger generation by engaging with the schools, while all the time advocating for WACHS and the multitude of services that we provide for the betterment of our community.





# QUIT B FIT

## TACKLING INDIGENOUS SMOKING PROGRAM

### Program purpose

To reduce the prevalence of current smokers within Indigenous communities as well as reducing the likelihood of tobacco uptake.

### Aim of program

To aid in reducing the significant health gaps between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians. Provide individuals and communities with appropriate information about how smoking has harmful impacts on our health and allow individuals to make informed health decisions.

### Objectives of program

Provide education and awareness of the negative and harmful effects of tobacco smoke on individuals, families and communities.

Quit B fit aims to work in conjunction with key stakeholders to provide appropriate referral pathways for smokers wishing to make a quit attempt.

### Outcomes of program

Quit B Fit has worked with various schools and communities in the last year to continue to provide education and awareness around the negative effects of tobacco. This year we have worked with over 400 kids completing tobacco education sessions throughout Western NSW.

This year we have been involved in over 40 events where we have held tobacco stalls and provided education to communities from across the Central West, Far West and New England regions.

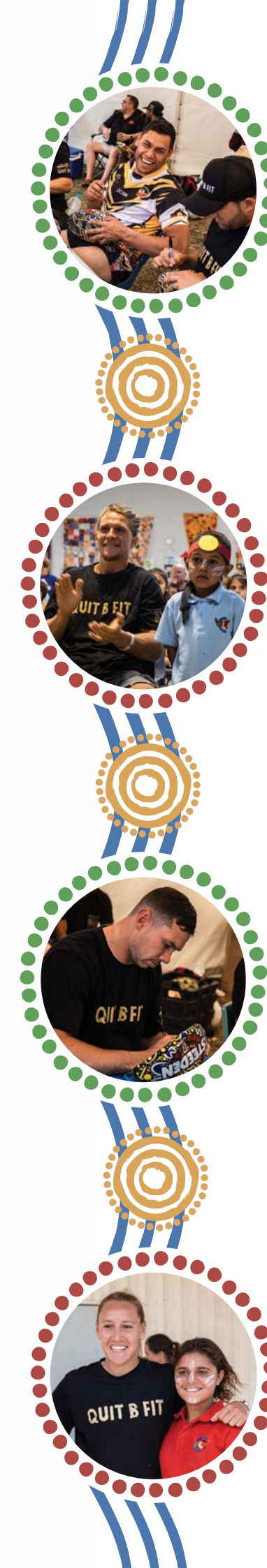


Quit B Fit has also continued our ongoing Workplace smoking audits, with a further 16 done throughout the region this year, whilst continuing to work closely with the ones we have previously completed.

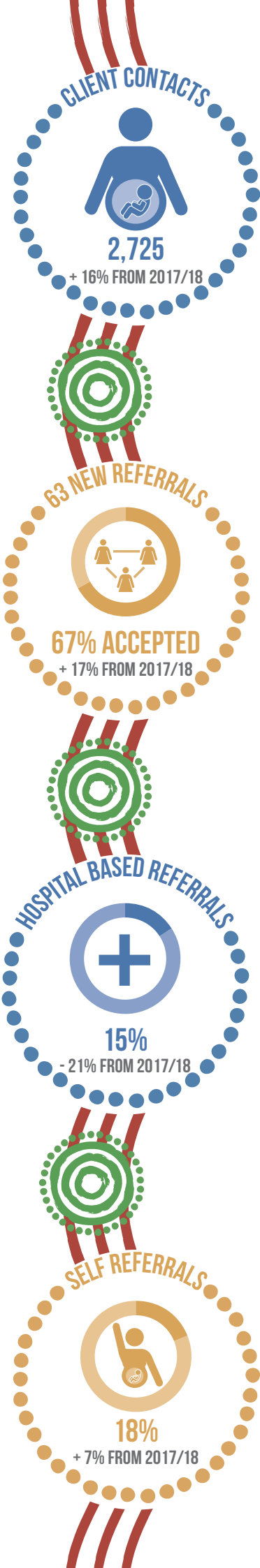
We continue to make more workplaces smoke-free.

Quit B Fit were again the major sponsors of the NSW Aboriginal Rugby League Knockout and this event was smoke-free for the 5th consecutive year, since Quit B Fit became affiliated with the event.

Quit B Fit has also partnered with the Walgett and Dubbo Rugby League Knockouts to make them smoke-free events and to keep pushing for smoke-free communities.







# AUSTRALIAN NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

## DUBBO

### Program purpose

The Australian Nurse-Family Partnership Program (ANFPP) is a home visiting program based on the US Nurse-Family Partnership.

The program empowers and informs first-time Indigenous mums or mums whose partner is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and supports them to reach their personal goals and grow strong, healthy families. Empowerment of the client is emphasised, with the five client centred principles reflecting this: focus on strengths; focus on solutions; only a small change is necessary; the client is the expert in her own life; and follow the client's heart's desire.

### Aim of program

The ANFPP offers support and guidance to clients during early pregnancy, and on through their baby's infancy and toddlerhood until 2 years of age. The program aims to improve pregnancy outcomes, improve child health and development, and improve parental life course by identifying goals related to education, employment, and family planning.

### Objectives of program

Each client is allocated a home visiting team, made up of a highly trained Nurse and Aboriginal Family Partnership Worker, who deliver Program content using the therapeutic relationship as a solid foundation.

Through intensive home visiting, prescribed content is incorporated alongside topics of relevance to the client and family, covering the domains of My Health; My Life; My Child and Me; My Family and Friends; and the identification of

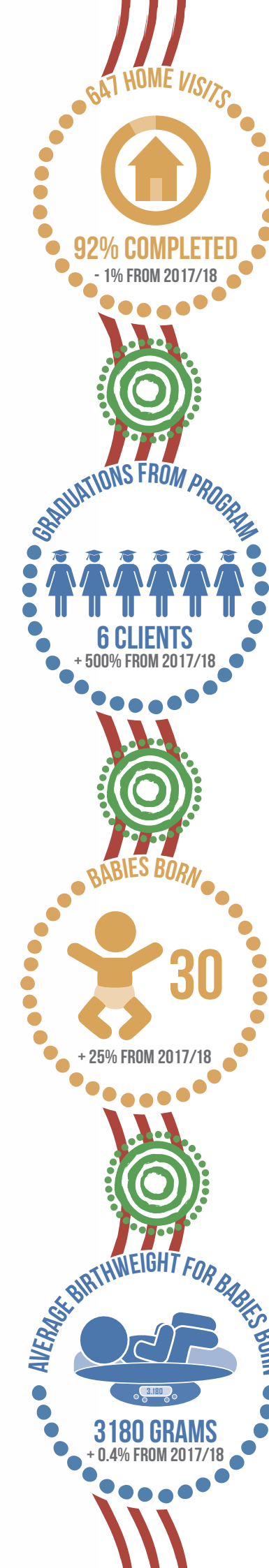


appropriate supports and services. Motivational Interviewing is used by staff to aid the client in identifying and achieving goals throughout the Program and beyond. Dyadic assessments are used to identify areas of strength in parenting, and to develop plans to strengthen attachment and responsiveness where needed.

### Outcomes of program

Clients have met goals such as obtaining their licence, renting or buying a property, enrolling in education, commencing employment, and planning to expand their family.

This year we have seen clients reduce or cease illicit drug use, and identify relationships that involved domestic and family violence, particularly following the rollout of the Domestic and Family Violence Pathway.

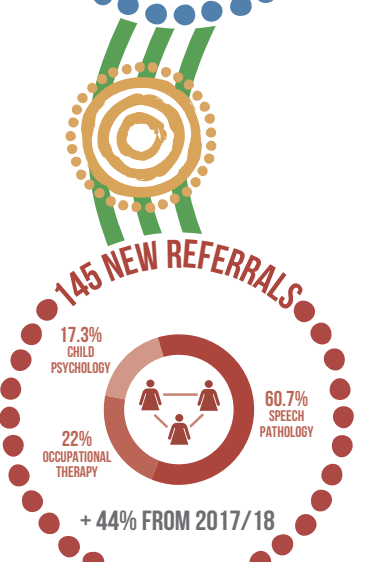




OUR GRADUATES 2018/19







# ABORIGINAL CHILDREN'S THERAPY TEAM DUBBO

## Program purpose

ACTT works in a culturally relevant framework, offering Speech Pathology, Occupational Therapy, Psychology services in partnership with Aboriginal Health Workers and a Therapy Aide.

## Aim of program

ACTT aims to improve the availability of Allied Health Specialists to Aboriginal Children in the Dubbo community, improve client outcomes.

## Objectives of program

The program aims to improve:

- The availability of Allied Health Specialists to Aboriginal Children (0-8) living in Dubbo
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children's development by utilising screening and health promotion
- Allied Health outcomes for the Aboriginal Children in the Dubbo Community
- The knowledge and involvement of the parents/carers in their child's development
- The knowledge and skills of Allied Health Services to the Indigenous Workforce
- Community engagement

## Outcomes of program

ACTT continues to provide Speech Pathology, Occupational Therapy and Psychology services to Aboriginal children living in Dubbo. Families access services based at the Aboriginal Child Maternal Hub, through local Preschools, Early Childhood Centres and Primary Schools, based on child and family needs.



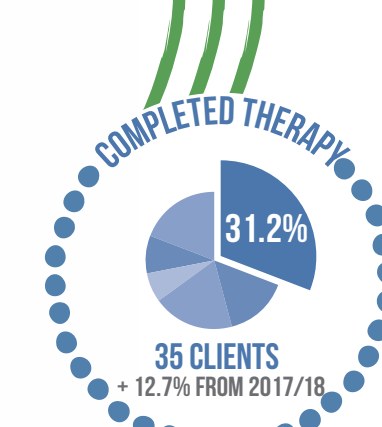
ACTT continues to support clients attending therapy sessions through the provision of transport to and from appointments as identified.

In 2018/2019 ACTT has faced challenges recruiting two Allied Health Speech Pathology and Occupational Therapy vacancies and as an interim measure we outsourced Speech Pathology services to alleviate waitlist pressures.

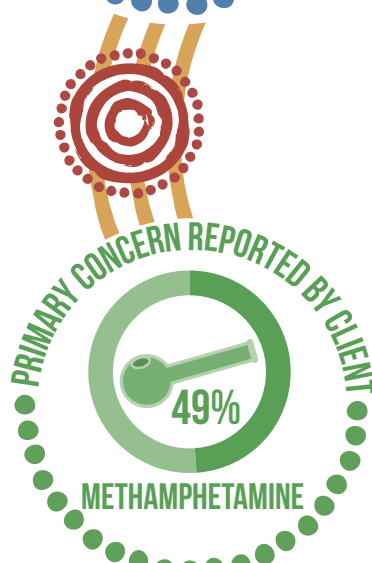
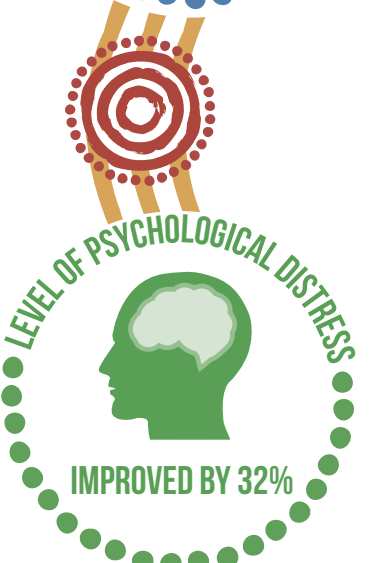
Throughout the year ACTT has participated in community events such as the "pop up playgroup" aimed at providing activities to children and their families not yet attending school. Aboriginal Community Support Workers provide support to families in establishing and re-engaging in community networks (such as Playgroups, Preschools and Long Day Care enrolments) whilst waiting for therapy, as well as, developing strong partnerships with health, education and family services to assist families accessing and making the best use of local services to improve their child's outcomes. Examples include supporting families accessing hearing services through the Hear Our Heart program, supporting with Paediatrician appointments and NDIS applications.

ACTT works closely with Buninyong, Allira and Dubbo West Infants Preschools in providing targeted Speech and Occupational Therapy skills groups to children in the year prior to starting school. These groups and School Readiness Groups, run out of the HUB, aim to close the health and education gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Children starting school.

WACHS continues to support all ACTT staff through training opportunities that are building their knowledge and skills with current, evidence based best practice in supporting children and families accessing ACTT services.







# MAAYU MALI

## MORE ABORIGINAL RESIDENTIAL REHABILITATION SERVICE

### Program purpose

The purpose of the program is to promote individual and community wellbeing and reduce harmful substance use through the provision of culturally appropriate alcohol and other drug (AOD) prevention, education, treatment, rehabilitation and aftercare services for Indigenous Australians.

Maayu Mali provides a minimum 12 week residential rehabilitation program for men and women 18 years old and over.

The program aims to provide support and healing for the whole person in the context of their community- including the provision of individual and group treatment, individual case management, skills and training, recreation support and health and fitness, and art and cultural support.

### Aim of program

To support individuals to improve their quality of life and focus on recovery using a trauma informed and cultural healing focus aimed at achieving long-term sustainable outcomes.

### Objectives of program

To deliver a 12 week residential rehabilitation program for up to 18 residents. The program will deliver the program utilising the Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Residential Rehabilitation Model of Care focusing on culturally safe practice.

The program aims to deliver to each client:

- Assessment and Care Planning, including Case Review
- AOD Treatment groups
- Education, Living Skills and other appropriate groups



- Individual AOD treatment focused on the needs of the client
- Individual Case Management and Case Coordination
- Cultural and Community connection and healing including through group work, art and cultural craft, excursions to country and elders groups
- Appropriate referral to , for example specialist mental health services, primary health care

### Outcomes of program

#### Individual outcomes

- Reduction/cessation of harmful use of alcohol and other drugs
- Reduction in severity of addiction
- Reduction in psychological distress and mental health symptoms
- Improvement in Quality of Life
- Reduction in risky practices (including sharing of injection equipment, drink driving)

#### Program outcomes

- 80% occupancy for Aboriginal men and women seeking substance use treatment
- 100% of clients undertake a comprehensive assessment and an individualised treatment plan.
- 100% of clients co-design an aftercare plan
- Clients participate in treatment program including therapeutic groups, case management, cultural, recreation, training and education activities.







# GREATER WESTERN ABORIGINAL HEALTH SERVICE

## About GWAHS

Greater Western Aboriginal Health Service (GWAHS) delivers holistic comprehensive primary health care within the Western Sydney and Nepean Health Regions.

GWAHS is a health service for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in Western Sydney and Nepean regions providing services that include GP's, health checks, chronic disease programs, men's health, drug and alcohol, mental health and child and family services.

In February 2017, WACHS announced that it had been successful in its bid to tender for the provision of culturally appropriate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health services. The Commonwealth funding had been awarded to WACHS under the Indigenous Australian's Health Program for Western Sydney, Nepean and Blue Mountains region. The transition from WentWest to WACHS operations took place on the 1st April 2017.

Our new Blue Mountains service will be open in early 2020.

## Our Vision

To provide and be recognised for providing the Aboriginal community of Western Sydney with high quality, appropriate, efficient and effective primary health care and related services

## Our Purpose

- a. To provide the highest standard of client care whilst incorporating a holistic approach toward diagnosis and management of illness
- b. We are committed to promoting health, wellbeing and disease prevention to all clients
- c. We do not discriminate in the provision of excellent care and aim to treat all clients with dignity and respect





# MT DRUITT & PENRITH CLINIC

## Program purpose

To plan, deliver, coordinate and advocate for effective clinic and community based primary health care to the Aboriginal Community.

## Aim of program

To deliver culturally appropriate primary health care services tailored to the needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community through diagnosis, treatment prevention and health promotion.

This approach aims to improve population health in the areas of antenatal care, postnatal care, child health, child and adult immunisations and to deliver screening initiatives around diabetes, sexually transmitted infections, and chronic disease management.

## Objectives of program

- Early diagnosis and treatment of acute illnesses
- Prevention and detection of chronic diseases
- Links to eye, ear and oral health
- Health crisis intervention and referral
- Health promotion for nutrition, alcohol, holistic health, women's health and men's health

## Outcomes of program

This year the Mount DrUITT clinic has seen significant capital works conducted with a refurbished waiting room and reception area, and the addition of 4 new clinical spaces in order to continually improve our primary health care delivery.



We have entered into a number of relationships with key stakeholders to improve the care we deliver including; the Western Sydney Local Health District who are supporting a range of different health promotion activities including cervical screening awareness campaigns, and smoking cessation programs.

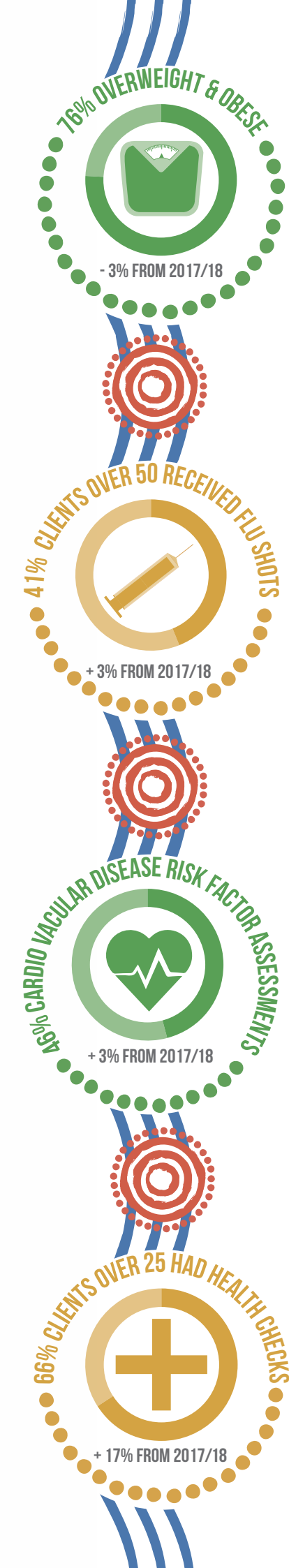
Flourish Australia are enhancing the Social Emotional Well Being Team (SEWBT) and providing monthly access to a psychiatrist at the Mount DrUITT clinic to improve access to Mental Health expertise.

We have also had a huge effort from all the clinical team and community programs to undertake a large drive to increase the number of Aboriginal health assessments conducted in conjunction with the "Deadly choices" program that has seen over 1000 health assessments conducted during this year.

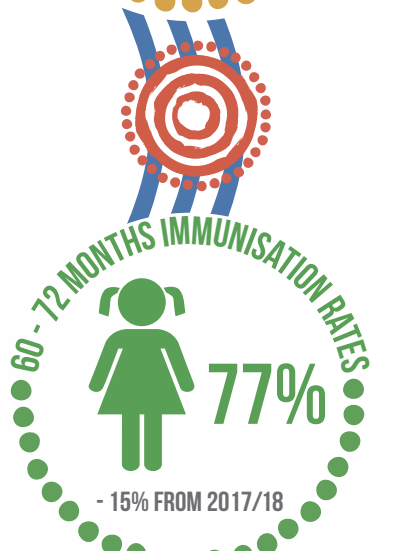
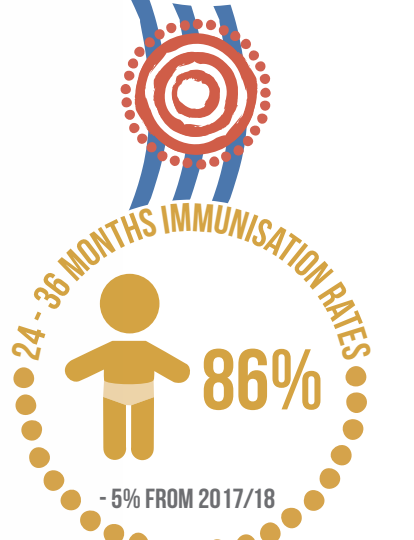
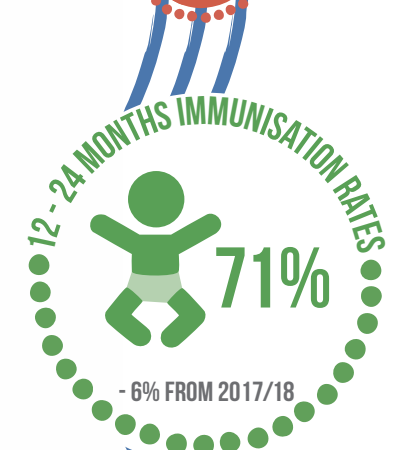
Ongoing improvement and refinement of clinical process has lead to Improvements in the following KPIs:

- Birth weight recorded
- Alcohol consumption recorded
- 25 year + health checks
- Cardiovascular risk assessments
- Influenza immunisation 50 year old +

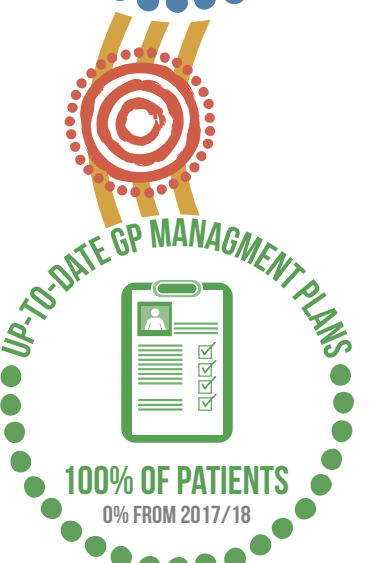
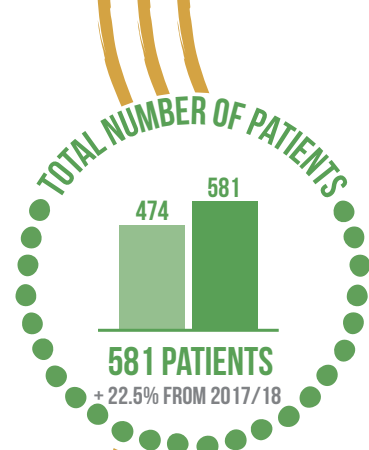
Continued and established cohesive partnerships with a range of visiting specialists and clinics including Paediatricians, University of Sydney Speech Pathology Student clinic, Audiology, Podiatry, Ear Nose and Throat Surgeons and Chronic Disease Management community groups.











# INTEGRATED TEAM CARE

## MT DRUITT

### Program purpose

Improve access to a range of allied health and specialist services for Aboriginal and /or Torres Strait Islander patients with chronic health conditions.

### Aim of program

The ITC program aims to improve outcomes for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander patients with chronic health conditions through better access to coordinated and multidisciplinary care. It also aims to contribute to closing the gap in life expectancy by improving access to mainstream primary health care, including allied health and specialists.

### Objectives of program

- Achieve better treatment and management of chronic conditions people through better access to the required services and better care coordination and provision of supplementary services
- Foster collaboration and support between the mainstream primary care and the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sectors
- Improve the capacity of mainstream primary care services to deliver culturally appropriate services to aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
- Increase the uptake of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander specific Medicare Benefits Schedule (MBS) items, including Health Assessments for Aboriginal and Torres Strait people and follow up items
- Support mainstream primary care services to encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander people to self-identify



- Increase awareness and understanding of measures relevant to mainstream primary care

### Outcomes of program

The ITC program supported patients accessing health services by attending consultations /appointments, advocating on their behalf and being involved in the care planning process. This allowed program staff to assist patients understand the medical advice provided and build close relationships with health professionals, assisting with the coordinated management of patients with chronic health conditions.

ITC program staff continued to improve communication and patient health literacy to build client capacity and support their health needs. ITC program staff attended local pharmacies to collect patient prescriptions, provided one on one transport to patients with mobility support requirements, ensured delivery of medical equipment and assisted with referrals to appropriate services as required. High need ITC patients at GWAHS were provided with case conferencing as part of their care coordination.

In June ITC staff in collaboration with the chronic disease clinical staff, provided a diabetes education session for 8 patients on the ITC program. The program also supervised an Aboriginal medical student from the University of Western Sydney for five weeks, 2 days per week. She assisted with the development of the Diabetes Education day.

The GWAHS website was updated with relevant ITC information in January 2019, a new brochure was developed and distributed to key stakeholders and the ITC patient referral form was also reviewed and implemented.







The team initiated a system to contact external patients to remind them of 715/721/723 updates required. In addition, all internal patients are contacted by ITC/GWAHS clinical staff to remind them to update 715/721/723 as part of the program requirements. The program also;

- Initiated ongoing communication with local mainstream General Practices in the Blacktown LGA to support uptake of the MBS 715 and increase capacity to provide culturally appropriate care to Aboriginal clients. This has resulted in the majority of referrals including 715s and or 721s/723s.
- Supported 'The Deadly Blues' Program to promote 715 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Assessments.

## Client Story

One of the great things about the ITC program has been the availability of funds for purchase of mobility items that make a huge difference to the quality of someone's life. Often patients have been on waiting lists for lengthy periods and therefore having immediate access to purchase some of this equipment has improved patients overall health and wellbeing. A case in point, recently, was a young man who has a debilitating illness, "large left thalamic-basal ganglia" that impacts on his mobility as well as right side hemiplegia, depression, schizophrenia managed by monthly depot injections at GWAHS. He is a gentle person with a lovely disposition who wants to continue to enjoy his life as much as possible. He also has a female partner who cares for him. The program was able via Exceptional Circumstances funding to recently purchase a mobility scooter for him. He and his partner were so grateful and excited when we delivered the scooter and the first thing he did was go out to the local shops and do the grocery shopping with her accompanying him on foot.



We have many other stories like this where patients' lives have improved significantly because of the purchase of equipment or the program being able to fund an important specialist/allied health appointment or provide transport to important medical appointments.





# SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL WELLBEING TEAM

## MT DRUITT

### Program purpose

To provide mental health, general medical services and drug and alcohol services for clients within a culturally appropriate setting.

### Aim of program

The social and emotional wellbeing team work with nursing staff and GPs to case manage and coordinate care for the treatment of medical, substance and mental health disorders.

### Objectives of program

- Holistic evidence based and culturally sensitive care for families on site at Mt DrUITT and Penrith
- Clinics and Australian Nurse Family Partnership Program, Luxford Rd, Mt DrUITT
- To provide a treatment framework for clients with dual diagnosis
- Work collaboratively with other service providers in our community

### Outcomes of program

The SEWB program has successfully supported, via case management and coordinated care model, a large cohort (153) high need patients with mental health conditions . Providing access to regular onsite and external medical services.

The program is operated from the multiple GWAHS sites:

- Mt DrUITT Clinic
- Penrith Clinic
- Australian Nurse Family Partnership Program building



The program successfully utilises the Integrated Team Care Program by providing access to relevant specialist and allied health appointments to meet clients' social and emotional wellbeing needs as well as their complex chronic medical conditions.

The program also provided offsite opioid substitution treatment clinics with GWAHS doctors at Mt DrUITT and Blacktown Hospitals.







# AUSTRALIAN NURSE-FAMILY PARTNERSHIP PROGRAM

## BLACKTOWN & NEPEAN

### Program purpose

The ANFPP is an evidenced based, sustained home visiting program that helps transform the lives of first-time mums living in the Blacktown and Nepean LGA's. The program empowers and supports first-time Indigenous mums or mums whose partner is Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, walking alongside the family until their child is two years of age, encouraging them and equipping them to reach their personal goals and grow strong, healthy families.

### Aim of program

The aim of the program is to support clients and their families to experience improved health, wellbeing and economic self-sufficiency. This is achieved through the provision of a culturally safe, strengths-based program. The home visiting team, made up of an Aboriginal Family Partnership Worker and Nurse Home visitor, provides valuable support and education to families, promoting healthy development in the early years of a child's life and building the self-efficacy of the family.

### Objectives of program

The underlying objective of the ANFPP is to improve the health, wellbeing and self-sufficiency of parents and their children using a client-centred, strengths based, solution focused approach.

The first goal is to improve outcomes in pregnancy by working alongside and supporting women to address their health needs and engage effectively in preventative health practices. The second goal of the program is targeted at improving child health and development by working with parents to support them to



be the best parents possible. The third and final goal of the program is to improve parental life course by working with and supporting parents to develop a vision of their own future, family planning, continued education and employment.

### Outcomes of program

#### Pregnancy outcomes

During the 2018-2019 period 33 babies were born on the program with an average weight of 3109grams.

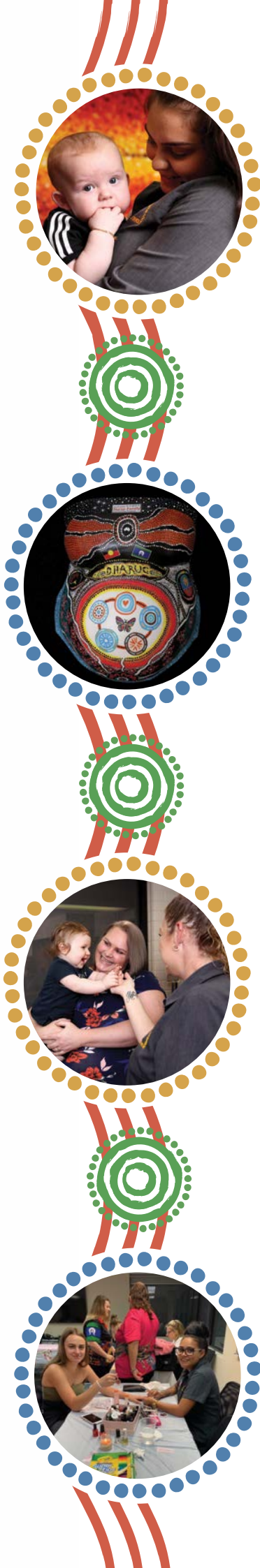
Four clients have received the program while in custody during their pregnancy and have gone on to deliver healthy babies and these four women are parenting their babies.

The team have supported a number of clients who it is their first opportunity to parent. Families who have had previous children removed from their care at birth have taken their babies home and have been supported in the restoration process with their other children.

#### Child Health and Development

All of the children in the program are thriving and the team continue to be very proud of what amazing Mothers our clients are. As a new program commencing home visiting in March 2018, our oldest babies are just turning one.

As a part of the program the home visiting team perform developmental questionnaires to determine if a child's development is on track for their age. This process has supported parents in the program to be aware of their child's milestones. The team have supported families in identifying activities they can undertake to address any concerns they have







with their child's development. The team provide early referrals and support families accessing allied health or other services if required. One client was supported in enrolling her child in child care as the mother was keen to promote her babies social and emotional development.

Our 6 weekly group days have been a great opportunity for families to come together and for the babies to socialise with other children promoting social development. A number of families who have formed connections through these group days now catch up on a regular basis with their babies. We look forward to our first graduations next year.

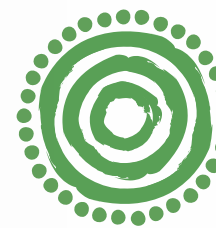
#### Parental life course

Over the past year the team have seen a number of clients reach goals they have set through the program. A number of clients have moved into their own private rentals, gained their drivers licence and returned to work, tafe and school. Our group days continue to be an opportunity for the team to celebrate the achievements of our clients and for clients to share their successes, providing motivation and mentoring to clients who are in the early stages of the ANFPP.

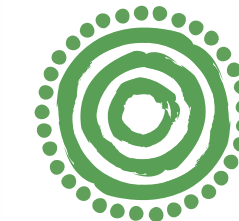
"I really appreciate your help with my daughter to allow me to participate in the cooking and nutrition classes. Thank you for teaching me how to choose healthier alternatives when cooking for myself and my daughter. Wouldn't have been able to do it without you guys! Cannot wait for the next group/cooking day!"

#### WHAT OUR CLIENTS SAY

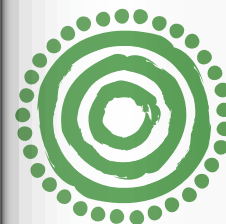
"I'm born on Wiradjuri country in Wagga but originally my family come from Durug country. While moving back to my ancestors land and discovering deep roots that come along with the area it was very important for me to continue to connect and close the gap for my future children. ANFPP has helped to bring information and comfort to myself and fiancé when we did fall pregnant with our first baby... they helped with connecting me to resources I may of needed and also became a big part of my life as I went through pregnancy, birth and throughout bubs life so far (now 1year old). ANFPP have friendly people who are down to earth and nurses to help take away any worries before during and after pregnancy. The workers come together and just become such a important part of our lives. Helping with health and nutrition, connecting with other people and mums, leading the way for healthy bubs and aiming to generally make people's lives a little better in any way they can. The only thing I wish was different was the length of time we are limited to in this program. 2 years isn't that long to have with people who feel like family. ANFPP definitely was one of the programs I didn't know I really needed and relied on for help and information in the early days."



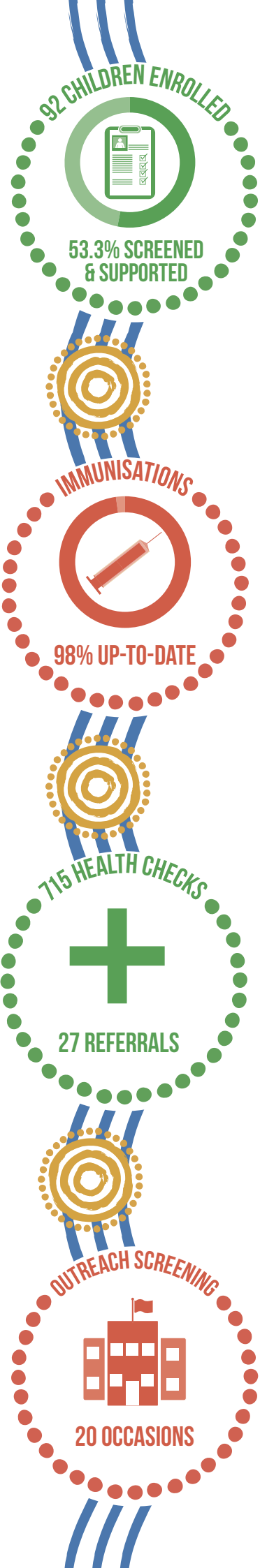
"I struggle with anxiety and depression and often feel very alone, having the ANFPP team visit me at home is very beneficial. I enjoy their presence and having people to yarn with. They have always listened to me and helped me resolve any issues I am facing. They are both amazing ladies and I couldn't ask for two stronger more understanding women to have home visits with. I am always learning new things about my daughter's growth and development in the content ANFPP provides. There are so many things that benefit us and I am very grateful for the ANFPP. I hold my workers in high regard and would recommend them to anyone"



"This program helped me a lot. I learnt a lot of stuff that I never knew before. It made me very confident in myself becoming a new mum."







# CONNECTED BEGINNINGS

## MT DRUITT

### Program purpose

Prevention and early intervention, to assist children throughout their health journey and to be able to provide school readiness support.

### Aim of program

The aim of this team is to integrate early childhood, maternal health and family support services within school settings. The program is for pregnant mothers and children aged under 5 years in the Mount Druitt and Doonside regions so that children are healthy and well prepared for school.

This includes engaging families in health care to facilitate better outcomes by the time they start school with a focus on the following domains.

- Physical health and wellbeing
- Social competence
- Emotional maturity
- Language and cognitive skills
- Communication skills and general knowledge

This project delivers the health component of the Connected Beginnings Projects that are led by education agencies Ngroo, Mount Druitt and Ngallu Wal, Doonside

### Objectives of program

- Engagement from (preferably before) birth with mothers and families
- Early Diagnosis of developmental issues and immediate access to specialist services



- Highly structured explicit instructions from age three (not play based activities)
- Holistic Management of a child
- Strong school leadership and instructional activity

### Outcomes of program

Connected beginnings team is complemented by Aboriginal Health Workers and a Team Leader.

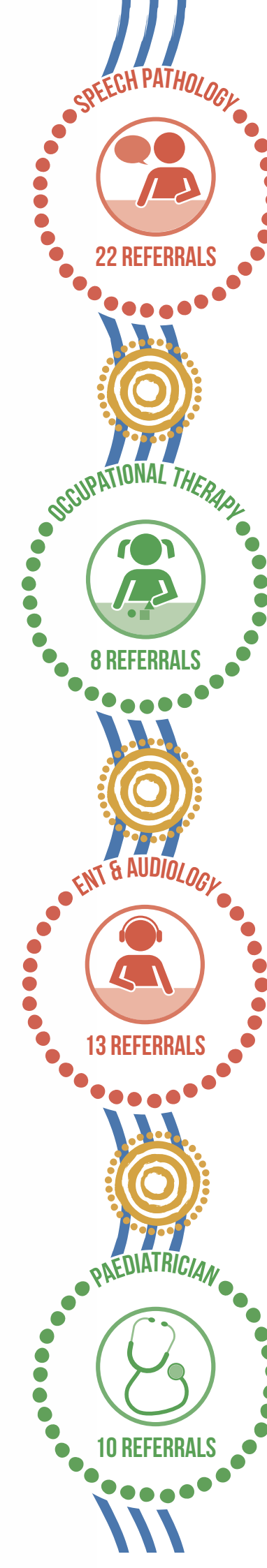
To date we have 92 children enrolled with Connected Beginnings, some of which have been referred through our Education lead agencies Ngroo(Mount Druitt) & Ngallu Wal (Doonside).

We commenced screening Late 2018 and have currently screened and supported 49 clients, 9 of which we were able to support prior to commencement of school in 2019.

We have partnered up with Local Preschool Yenu Allowah that has 98% of children attending that identify as ATSI to commence the screening of children.

Through the partnership of GWAHS & Ngroo, Ngroo has been able to provide a speech pathologist to go out fortnightly to Yenu Allowah and support children who require ongoing therapy onsite.

Our team commenced weekly outreach clinics in January 2019 at Ngallu Wal where we conducted child/parents screeners for children of Doonside. We have also attended several community events run and held by Ngallu Wal.







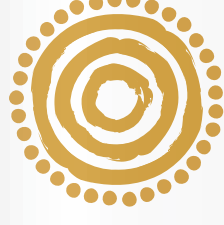
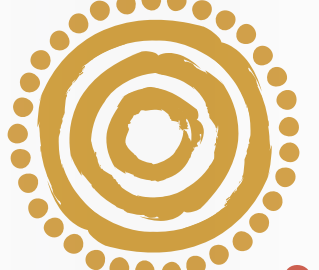
Our team is made up of health professionals that have facilitated the following clinics out of GWAHS:

- Speech Pathology – 4th year Sydney Uni Speech students Facilitated by Larra Jurotte
- Audiology and ENT – supported by RDN and facilitated by Michelle Turvey
- Immunisation Catch up – Clair Padilla partnered WSLHD Clinical Nurse Specialist for immunisation to ensure all children that are enrolled with CB have up to date immunisation status, arrange catch up and assist families to obtain a copy of immunisation statement in preparation for school readiness.

Through community engagement we have been able to establish working relationships and work towards strengthening partnerships.

Our team partake in Mums and Bubs committee meetings held monthly by WSLHD Aboriginal Health Hub, which has allowed us to gain further insight into events, programs and support available to community and their families.

We have attended several orientation and school readiness days to provide information sessions to families around Connected Beginnings and GWAHS services.







# QUALITY

WACHS strives for innovative best practice to successfully meet the health and cultural needs of our clients. We are accountable to these clients, our staff, the community and funding bodies to be continually improving our model.

Being accredited is a key benchmark for measuring the quality of our service and gives us an opportunity to demonstrate that we are meeting regulatory requirements. Accreditation cycles occur every three years and we adhere to both the Royal Australian College of General Practice (RACGP) - Standards for General Practice 5th Edition and the Quality Innovation and Performance (QIP) - QIC Health and Community Services Standards 7th Edition.

All teams record and implemented quality improvement projects at a program or local level in addition to an organisation-wide Quality Action Plan. The themes for organisational improvement through this plan are governance, management systems, consumer and community engagement, diversity and cultural appropriateness and service delivery.

Recent improvements stemming from our Quality Action Plan include:

- Staff Immunisation Program - staff receive the immunisations that are recommended for health workers in accordance with The Australian Immunisation Handbook
- Supporting the training of Aboriginal Health Workers – to become Aboriginal Health Practitioners with a Certificate IV in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Primary Health Care
- A WACHS clinical governance and quality committee - representatives from Moree, Dubbo, Wellington, Western Sydney, work health & safety and culture training & development

WACHS looks forward to implementing our current improvement goals and continuing our journey towards being a leading, high-performing, quality Aboriginal Health Service.



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