

# GURRINY news

HEALTHY  
PEOPLE  
HEALTHY  
COMMUNITY

ISSUE 7: November 2013

## Conference visitors inspired by progress



Staff at Gurriny recently took the opportunity to show more than 90 health professionals and students what they have achieved so far in the transition to community-controlled health services in Yarrabah.

From relatively humble beginnings in the 1990s, Gurriny Yealamucka Health Services Aboriginal Corporation been a model of what self-empowerment programs can achieve.

Gurriny CEO Sue Andrews said the visit was very much about transition.

“I think it was a unique opportunity for all of them to visit an Australian Indigenous community,” she said.

“The staff here spoke very eloquently about how Gurriny has grown has grown from the base of the social and emotional wellbeing program, which was all about empowerment, and from there moving into the clinical services of an extended general practice

within the concept of Gurriny’s model of care, which is about community outreach.”

Senior Medical Officer Dr Kingsley Pearson said the visiting group had been attending a World Summit on rural and remote medicine in Cairns over the week.

“730 people attended the conference,” he said.

“I think it was a great experience for those young doctors, and particularly medical students, to hear what we’re doing, because what we are hoping is they then get interested working in more rural and remote locations, which are always starved of good doctors and good health staff.

“It was a very positive and

empowering thing for everyone concerned, not only have that sort of conference in Cairns, but for them to come out and see Yarrabah and Gurriny.

“After we did the presentation for the second group there was a Cree Indian doctor who was impressed to hear the staff talking about how Gurriny had developed.

“She said those were exactly the issues they deal with for their communities and it was hard to actually get governments and health organisations to be aware of the social determinants of health and the importance of empowering the community around health and health decisions.

“That was great feedback for all our staff to hear.”



# Gurriny staff and family support Bishop's fifth footy carnival

The Biannual Bishop Malcolm Football Carnival was generously supported by Gurriny this year. Various members of our staff pulled on footy shorts and boots to enter the crowds and enjoy a weekend of sports and fun activities. Off the fields the Gurriny team took advantage of the community event and with the support of Yarri Seahawks worked hard throughout the carnival promoting awareness of suicide prevention.



Top: Yarrabah Sea Girls v Mossman Ladies, Bishop Arthur Malcolm, Yarrie Maroon v Yarrie White; Right L-R: Gurriny Suicide Prevention Promotion staff & families; Security Merrill Richards & strapper Petrina Deemal-Neller; Sue Andrews & family; unofficial Yarrie mascot Hamish Fourmile; Below L-R: Amanda Harris & Tiffany Malone with Tiarna and Madelene Bounghi; Seated in front Elverina Johnson & Lynn Yeatman, standing Stanley Yeatman, Dorita Wilson & Shane Mimi; Wayne Costello, Colin Fourmile, Preston & Charles Andrews & Keegan Graham; Ross Andrews, Cornelius Richards & Valmai Pollard; Seated Thelma Yeatman & Sherrya Richards; Mundraby Family; Bottom line L-R: Back Kayla Joinbee with bub Kate Kynuna, Stephen Patterson, middle Terri Mundraby & Kiarni Kynuna, front Caitlin Mossman & Sheanah Ludwick; Quinesha Adams, Bernice Yeatman, Dorita Murgha, Lindsey Murgha & Patricia Ross-Kelly; Jackson-Singleton Family; Hospital Creek gang; and David Sam, Tabua & Thomas Oui, Claude Kynuna, TC & seated Marshall Fourmile





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# Profiles

## Board Member Rev Mick Connolly

I was born in Cairns and grew up in Yarrabah, Bessie Point and Quamby, about 50km north west of Cloncurry in western Queensland.

I am a volunteer Bible teacher/field worker for Wontulp-Bi-Buya College Cairns.

My two main interests are spreading the Gospel and the health and well-being of peoples.

To my way of thinking the two are mutually inclusive, and I see both as providing the setting for holistic healing, as expected by most who respect God and the health system.

I am a founding member of Gurriny and remain on the Board of Directors there, as well as being a founding and current member of the Gindaja Treatment & Healing Indigenous Corporation Board.

With my years of experience I always hope to give input alongside my fellow directors, who have experience in their own fields, into the smooth running of the organisation which in turn leads to contented staff and people being well-cared for.

Many of us oldies are eagerly and constantly scanning the horizon for younger people to take over these roles.



## Senior Medical Officer Dr Kingsley Pearson

I'm from Sydney, originally, but I spent all of my medical life in rural locations.

I first moved to Nimbin in Northern New South Wales as a GP back in the early 1980s and I was GP there for about 12-13 years. Then I set up in Lismore, just down the road from there in a combined general and alternative medicine practice. I started working for Katherine West Health Service in Lajamanu in the Northern Territory in 2007 and I spent about 18 months with them. After that I worked on Elcho Island in a similar sort of role as a remote area GP for about two years.

And then I heard about Yarrabah and decided to come and do a locum here back in 2010 with Queensland Health and really enjoyed it, and sort of came back on and off between working in the Solomon Islands and the Northern Territory and Yarrabah for a

couple of years. Early last year I initiated a Chronic Disease Program for the community here and through developing that I saw what was happening with the transition and decided I really wanted to be a part of that process.

I have a unique role in Gurriny because I'm also the Medical Superintendent for the Queensland Health doctors in this facility.

That means a dual role, one with Queensland Health and one with Gurriny, and that's mostly to help support the transition process.

And I love it.



### COMING UP IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:

- What's next!
- Transition update
- Board and staff profiles and pics