

## Yarrabah celebrates Transition Day!

Gurriny Yealamucka Health Services Aboriginal Corporation has signed an historic agreement with Queensland Health resulting in Queensland's first transfer of a local primary care service from the State to a community-controlled health organisation.

The official announcement was made at a Ministerial health summit in Cairns this month by Health Minister Lawrence Springborg, Gurriny CEO Sue Andrews and Cairns and Hinterland, Hospital and Health Service Chief Executive Julie Hartley-Jones.

The transition will result in primary health care services in Yarrabah being delivered by a Gurriny and controlled by a board elected by the community. Mr Springborg congratulated the community and the respective health services for their hard work in bringing the transition to fruition.

"This indeed is a landmark development for the delivery of Indigenous health services in Queensland," he said.

"It follows many years of discussion and negotiation, and is the result of a real commitment to the process from all parties."

Mr Springborg said there was clear evidence from Australia and overseas to show when Indigenous people participated in setting health priorities for their communities, and in designing and delivering health services, results could include increased access to health services and improved health outcomes.

Mrs Andrews said it had been a long journey for her community, which now has a 12-month contract to prove it could work.

"This started back in the early 80s when a group of elders got together under a tree and decided the

current service in Yarrabah wasn't actually doing anything or making an impact on health for our people," she said. "They talked about a community health program back then so this has been a journey since the 1980s."

Ms Hartley-Jones said they had signed a deed of agreement towards the transition of primary healthcare services back in 2006.

"This has now become a reality after years of collaboration and commitment," she said.

"Yarrabah is the largest independent Aboriginal community in Australia and it is expected that our work in Yarrabah will lead the way for the rest of the State if not the entire country." *Continued next page...*



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Ms Hartley-Jones said the transfer to community control would mean the health service could be “more responsive to community needs”. “This allows service delivery that is respectful and adaptable based on the priorities and cultural beliefs of the Yarrabah people with a focus on tangible community outcomes,” she said. “It is a hugely significant milestone in the advancement of health for community-controlled health services in Queensland.” Mrs Andrews said there were many people to thank.

“There’s so many people to thank along the way from the elders to the local people here in Yarrabah to government at all levels, and especially the local people who have been part of the journey of Gurriny since we started the journey, we have to acknowledge these people,” she said. “Most of all I think the elders; the elders who were first sitting under the tree talking about transition, talking about community control, they’re the people who aren’t here now but would have seen their vision come true today.”



# NAIDOC Day 2014



# Under-8s' Day 2014

Childcare Links Coordinator Lynn Yeatman and Assistant Keisha Neal have led the way in putting together another successful annual Under-8s day for the year.

“The purpose of today is to link families with agencies and other services in the community,” Ms Yeatman said.

“The message today is skin sores prevention, so encouraging

families to carry out basic hygiene and care of their families.”

Ms Neal said while kids were busy with activities including face painting, balloons, dancing and a small petting zoo, staff took the

opportunity to carry out surveys and distribute information.

“We get one-on-one time with the adults while the kids are all playing, so win-win each way,” she said.



COMING UP IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:

- What's next!
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- Staff profiles and pics

*This issue of Gurriny News was written, photographed, edited and produced by Christine Howes. For more information about the font 'Dyslexie' see [www.studiostudio.nl](http://www.studiostudio.nl)*