



GURRINY YEALAMUCKA
HEALTH SERVICE ABORIGINAL CORPORATION

Gurriny News

August 2017



Commitment to Hepatitis eradication on Alaskan agenda for Gurriny workers

Gurriny Yealamucka's Health Worker Milton Mossman and Youth Worker Paul Neal were two of six successful scholarship applicants chosen from across the country to attend the Second World Indigenous Peoples' Conference on Viral Hepatitis in Alaska in early August.

The two were highly recommended to the Department of Health to win the scholarships by the Cairns & Hinterland Hospital & Health Service (CHHHS) Queensland Health Viral Hepatitis Health Promotion and Hepatitis Australia for their commitment, initiative and leadership in the community.

Mr Mossman said it had been a "massive" experience.

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Pictured above at the University of Alaska where the conference was held, is Paul Neal & Milton Mossman with William, who only speaks Portuguese and is from a village in the Amazon.

“It was my first time leaving Australia, leaving the country and travelling half way to the other side of the world; it’s an eye-opener,” Gurriny Health Worker Milton Mossman said (from page 1)...

“In terms of the work, we pretty much engaged a lot with the other Indigenous health workers that also came from Australia,” he said.

“We also engaged with the Indigenous people from America, so we networked a lot.

“We took the chance to speak about how we work in Gurriny with the programs we deliver, and how we work as a health service.

“They were pretty shocked and amazed, as well, about how we do our programs here.

“They didn’t realise what we do here is driven by Indigenous health workers out in the community, doing the home visits.

“We went to a health service there, and it was unreal.

“It was brand new six-storey building with 100 doctors, 2-300 nurses.

“But the thing was they were struggling because they didn’t have enough Indigenous health workers.

“We explained how we worked here and where we just don’t work within the health service, there were times you worked outside the health service as well.”

He said he learned a lot.

“I’d like to do a bit more advocacy but also while I’m in the front line here at Gurriny, I’d like to have a yarn, tell them about the conference and talk more about how we can make life a bit easier and longer for our people.”

Mr Neal agreed it was about engagement and networking.

“One of our target goals was to eliminate all Hepatitis in the world by 2030,” he said.

“Hepatitis is still in the back seat; we’re trying to bring it forward so government and World Health Organisation can help promote and resource the fight in eliminating it.

“It works on both levels of health with obviously the primary health with detection and trying to eliminate it, but also the lifestyle and mentality of patients who live with it and trying to prevent it.



“We just got good raps from people like Dr James Ward and the other Australian delegates and also the world delegates.”

He said the flags, given to them by MP Curtis Pitt before they left, were passed on to their hosts.

“We also had a few other gifts from Australia; one was a clapstick that we presented,” he said.

“Part of our culture is when you’re presenting those things, like clapsticks and boomerangs, is to perform with them, so they asked if we could close the ceremony down with a dance, so we did that and invited other delegates to come up and dance with us.

“I guess that was the highlight for Milton and myself, and the experience is going to be with us for a long time now.

“It was a great effort from everyone and just felt special to finish it off with our traditional dance.”

CHHHS Viral Hepatitis Health Practitioner Rhondda Lewis said everyone should be tested for Hepatitis B at some point in their lives.

“Most people born in Australia who are under 30 will have been vaccinated for Hepatitis B, but everyone should get a Hepatitis B test



to check,” she said.

“People who are living with Hepatitis B need regular monitoring, as they may need to go on simple treatment of one pill once a day to help keep their liver healthy.

“In the meantime I’m so pleased for Paul and Milton to have this opportunity to represent Yarrabah and Australia in Alaska.

“They are both experts on the health needs of their community and on hepatitis B in particular as well as being highly respected community leaders and emerging artists of considerable skill.”



Integrating team care important for regional progress

Health workers and professionals from community controlled health services across the far north came together to visit each other's centres and swap ideas at an Integrated Team Care (ITC) workshop last month.

CEO Sue Andrews said ITC was about the whole of 'wrap around' care for clients with chronic disease. "The ITC formalises a team approach so that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients are supported across the full pathway of care, from encouragement and assistance to accessing health care through to provision of multidisciplinary care," she said. "The ITC allows us to develop innovative approaches that best meet local needs."

Last month's workshops were hosted by Innisfail and facilitated by Northern Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Alliance (NATSIH).

Day 1: Workshop participants consisted of ITC Coordinators and Outreach workers from Mackay, Bowen, Townsville, Innisfail, Mareeba, Yarrabah, Cape and Bamaga (NPA). We all shared how we delivered our programs and discussed what was working and what was not, and ways which we could all improve on our service delivery.

Day 2: The Workshop participants travelled to Yarrabah. We all met at Gurriny where Belinda and myself presented our

ITC Program and a Case Study of one of our clients who has had an amazing transformation in terms of managing and taking ownership of their health.

Dr Kingsley Pearson gave a brief presentation on the ITC Program "From a doctors' perspective" where he discussed our Case Study. He stated that the ITC Program was an excellent program which was showing very positive results and expressed his desire for the ITC Program to continue into the future.

Participants told us that our presentation was inspiring. We then visited Mutkin where Linda Sexton informed us of her service. We all had lunch on the beach front behind St Alban's.

Day 3: We had presentations from QISMC – Queensland Indigenous Substance Misuse Council, Check Up and the North Queensland Primary Health Network. It was a great Workshop and the learning and networking was invaluable to our Program.

Report by Gurriny Indigenous Health Worker Belinda Jackson and RN/ITC Coordinator, Margie Allen

Our Health Promotion Officer Alicia Hari has been busy over the past few weeks working with stakeholders to deliver key health messages to the mob in Yarrie at events and programs such as the:

- Yarrabah Careers Expo
- Dental Health education with Queensland Dental Health at the Daycare & Pre Prep Centre
- Hearing Health Awareness
- Heart and Heart Attack Education with Claine Underwood from Queensland Ambulance
- Deadly Choice Program with students at Yarrabah State School, and the
- Environmental health Horse Management Program with Yarrabah Aboriginal Shire Council.







L-R Robyn Ah-Wong, Barbara Thomas, Stanley Yeatman and his daughter Bernice

Being well a priority in new Gurriny program for families

Help is at hand for families around issues from housing to medical issues or getting kids to school to budgeting with Gurriny's new Family Well Being program.

Led by Robyn Ah-Wong with support workers Barbara Thomas and Stanley Yeatman, the program has been funded to strengthen and support families in the community.

"We work with them on things they have identified as a need for their wellbeing," Ms Ah-Wong said.

"So, we take a holistic view of their wellbeing, which means anything from helping with housing, medical appointments, family concerns, if there are children they might want help with. It might also be budgeting, it might be relationship building, it might be schooling or parenting, support.

"Anything they identify that affects their wellbeing and their family's wellbeing as a whole, we support them around that.

"They work voluntarily with us, so it's not demanded on any way, shape or form, and there's no time period for which we engage with them.

"As long as they've identified a need and we work forward on those needs, then they can stay with the program.

"We sit down and we look at what are those barriers for them, and maybe case-manage some of that and engage with other agencies, or work on strategies that they can implement within their homes, and maybe using other services to help them to sort some of those issues out.

"We can also help them with linking other services to them and other programs, depending on what their needs are.

"We're a support to the families themselves, but it's driven by them.

"It's what they identify as what they want to address within their own families."

She said the only criteria was participants must be Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander and live within the Yarrabah community.

"There must also be at least one

adult and one child," she said.

"We like to engage with the whole family along the way because what impacts on one often impacts on everybody."

Ms Ah-Wong worked for Link Up and in community and public health for many years before coming to Gurriny.

"I like engaging with the families and working as a team," she said.

"I can't do it without our support workers here, they're my connection to the community and I appreciate that."

Support worker Barbara Thomas said after nearly a decade in child protection, she was looking forward to a new focus on wellbeing rather than intervention.

"We get them to do the things they want to work on, instead of making them do things," she said.

"I'm very happy about that."

Thanks for hearing us Corinne!

Australian National University PhD Corinne Walsh has been in Yarrabah for the past six months researching what Yarrabah community members think about ears, hearing, sore/runny ears and hearing loss.

She has been hanging out and talking to a whole range of community members over the age of 14.

Corinne said she collected a lot of useful information and that she hoped the results would benefit Yarrabah residents and service providers.

“I just would like to sincerely thank everybody in Yarrabah for allowing me to be a part of your beautiful community for the past six months, and for being so warm, welcoming, and happy to share your stories, experiences and



suggestions,” she said.

“There is quite a lot out there on what health professionals, politicians and bureaucrats think about ear and hearing health – but there’s not a lot on how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people understand it and what they

believe works well for them.

“Your voices are very important, and this is what I hope my research has been able to do – allow the voices in Yarrabah to be heard.”

Corinne said she would be back out to Yarrabah for a week or two next year ready to report her findings and suggestions back to the community.

“Thank you again for having me Gurriny and Yarrabah,” she said.

You can contact Corinne any time at corinne.walsh@anu.edu.au

Cafe initiative gets people talking

Spill Da Beanz is a joint initiative between Worklink’s Partners in Recovery (PIR), Personal Helpers and Mentors (PHaMs) program, and YarriCino Cafe to bring awareness about mental health into the community.

In June they announced the ‘Spill Da Beanz’ cup design competition which was open to all ages. Entrants were asked to design a drawing with some words or a hashtag to highlight the need for people to talk about their mental health concerns.

Winners were announced in late August at a luncheon where the community was invited to enjoy some good free food and encourage each other to talk to someone who cares over a nice hot cuppa. YarriCino still has cups with the winning design

printed on it which aims to keep the conversation going that mental illness (whether short term or chronic) is nothing to be ‘shame’ about.

The initiative also hopes to reduce the stigma attached to mental illness by opening up those conversations on a more regular basis through education about mental health and wellness.



Apology from Rev Leslie Baird

I would like to offer my apologies to Mercy Baird. If I offended her or her mother in any way during my speech at Gurriny’s 25 year anniversary, there was no malice intended. I hope she will accept my apologies.

Gurriny Yealamucka Health Scholarship

The Gurriny Board is committed to supporting our mob studying in the health field, who may need some financial support, the health scholarship, for those taking up studies in the health discipline will be open in September 2017 to the value of \$15,000 (over three years), for further information please contact Gurriny Yealamucka Health Service.

Staff UPDATES



HR Manager Susanne Dale

Internal Staff Changes

Care Coordination Manager Margie Allen will start in this new role in early September.

Lynese Hari has been successful in her application to become a Health Worker and will start in her new role in October, 2017. Florence Given will transfer into the role of Care-Coordination Admin / Reception (Lynese's current role).

Lyn Yeatman is transferring from the Care Coordination Team to the Child Health Team. Lyn's transfer is in line with the Child Health expansion which will see a further two Indigenous Health Workers to be appointed over the next month, plus an additional Child Health Nurse. Nurse Amy is currently assisting in this area for two to three days per week.

Deborah Murgha will be transferring from the Support Services Team to the role of Women's Social & Emotional Well Being (SEWB) Health Officer. Deb will work closely with Melanie Megan and Kayleen in her transition to her new role.

Ismerril Keyes will take over the full-time role of Support Services Team member to replace Deborah. Ismerril has been a casual with GYHSAC for the past three years.

New Staff

There are six new employees, four of whom are Indigenous Health Workers trainees, starting in September.

The trainees are Steven Stafford, Kiallem Barlow, Valma Connolly and Yarum Underwood.

Maureen Cedric and Belita Kynuna have recently completed their Certificate III in Primary Health Care with Health Industry Training Australia.

Stanley Yeatman will start as a Support Worker in the Family Well Being program in early September.



Work placement

Kim Long (*above right*) is currently undertaking her work placement as part of her Certificate IV in Primary Health care with TAFE.

University Graduation

Congratulations to Alicia (Dixie - *pictured right*) Hari who graduated last month with a Bachelor of Business from Charles Sturt University.



Primary Health Care Training

Congratulations to Lyn Yeatman, Melanie Walsh, Teresa Neal, Katrina Connolly, Jannali Neal and Lynese Hari, all of whom have recently finished all their block training in their Certificate IVs in Primary Health Care.

Positions Vacant in August:

- Parents Under Pressure (*filled*)
- Clinic Support Manager
- Child Health Nurse (*filled*)
- Nurse Educator Part Time
- Casual Patient Transport Driver
- Male FWB Support worker (*filled*)
- SEWB Weekend relief Life Promotions Officer

Justice of the Peace Services

If you need any documents certified witnessed JP services are available Monday to Friday by appointment only, with Susanne Dale HR or Melanie Walsh HLSM.

Don't forget to find us on Facebook



or see our website at:
<http://www.gyhsac.org.au/>



Over the past three months we have had an outbreak of continuous coughing known as Pertussis in Yarrabah. This is a cough that persists

for 12 weeks, despite treatment, and can be very harmful for infants and young babies.

It presents as choking coughing fits, often triggering vomiting. It is highly contagious. Once a patient has been diagnosed with Pertussis we always need to review and treat family contacts as well.

It is very important to come to the clinic for early review if experiencing choking coughing fits.

THE OTHER BUG that has broken out of late, is Influenza A which has swept through Sydney and all of the major cities.

We have had a few cases in Yarrabah.

Fortunately our outbreak hasn't been as large as other centres, as lots of people were vaccinated for Influenza this year.

The "Fluvax" is still available, so I would encourage anyone who hasn't been vaccinated to come into the clinic and get the vaccination.