

Deadly Yarn'n

St Vincent's
leading the way in
Aboriginal Health

2016



Acknowledgement

We would like to acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land on which we live and work, the **Gadigal People of the Eora Nation**. We pay our respects to Elders past and present as we walk and work together in the journey of improving Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes. We would also like to acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal people who contributed their stories to this Newsletter. Thank you for sharing your personal journey and how it brought you to St Vincent's.

FRONT COVER ART

Lani Balzan of the Wiradjuri mob

The centre dot represents the hospital and the dots moving away are the healing and health. The individual dots around the outside represent different people and health professionals from all walks of life, working together to form a united front for Indigenous health. The dotted circles symbolise people gathering, whereas the dots around the painting represent networks of people. The five outer groups of dots represent the five Nuns that started the hospital in 1857 and from then the dots move towards the hospital symbolising its growth.



MESSAGE FROM

A/PROF
ANTHONY SCHEMBRI

CEO, St Vincent's Health Network
Sydney

Improving outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is not only a personal commitment I have, but it is also one of St Vincent's Health Network's strategic priorities.

All of us need to take ownership of our obligation to closing the gap, not just in health care but in employment and other opportunities as well for Aboriginal people. This year I have had the privilege of co-chairing the Dalarinji Committee alongside Aunty Fay from the Woolloomooloo community. The Committee is dedicated to achieving reconciliation and ensuring that each staff member understands their role in Closing the Gap. As health care workers, we have possibly one of the greatest opportunities to make a difference, and I am proud to share just a few of our achievements over 2016 in the very first edition of Deadly Yarn'n. Deadly Yarn'n is a celebration of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, and the work that we do to continually build a safe space for our Aboriginal staff and patients.



2019



A Quick Yarn

FROM
PAULINE DEWEERD

.....

It has been a **big and exciting year for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health** and I am so excited to be able to share this with you in the first edition of Deadly Yarn'n.

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2016 saw many great achievements in Aboriginal Health. We had the first All Staff Forum in Brisbane, which brought Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff together from across the organisation to focus on how we can improve the health and wellbeing of our people.

St Vincent's Health Australia also launched the Employment Parity Initiative. This represents an important milestone in achieving reconciliation through increasing the number of Aboriginal and Torres Strait staff members across our facilities. The first edition of Deadly Yarn'n celebrates the achievements of our staff and recognises the important events that have occurred throughout the year.

I hope you enjoy this edition of Deadly Yarn'n and are left feeling inspired by all the incredible stories.

ABORIGINAL HEART HEALTH

.....
(right) members
of the Wagga
community.
(bottom right)
Tamra Langley
and David Faktor



St Vincents gets serious about Aboriginal Heart Health

.....
St Vincent's recently launched a website dedicated
to educating the community about heart health and
rehabilitation following diagnosis of a heart condition.
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**It was this website that received
the Chairman's and category award
at the 2016 SVHA awards.**

But with heart disease being the
leading cause of illness and death for
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
people, St Vincent's set out to address
this issue by providing specifically
tailored resources and information
for Aboriginal people.

To achieve this, Tamra Langley,
Clinical Nurse Consultant and Lead
Developer of Heart Health, travelled
to Wagga Wagga alongside Pauline
Deweerd, Director of Aboriginal
Health, to meet with Aboriginal Health
Workers, Elders and patients to get
their feedback on the website. As a

result, Tamra and the team decided
to develop an Aboriginal microsite,
which will use videos of Aboriginal
and Torres Strait Islander patients
and their families, health workers and
ambassadors to educate communities
about cardiac health and rehabilitation.
The microsite will be available both
online and on a USB stick, which is
particularly useful for our patients in
rural and remote areas. The microsite
will be completed early 2017 and
again shown in Aboriginal communities
across NSW to get feedback before its
official launch. In the meantime why not
visit the current Heart Health website
and teach yourself about cardiac
health. www.svhhearthealth.com.au



New Positions



BENNY

.....
Human Resource and Indigenous
Program Specialist

.....
Meet Benny.

Benny is a Murri fella
from Queensland.
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**His mother's people are
the Karuwali people of the
Diamantina River** and his father's
people are the Mbarbaram people,
west of the Atherton Tablelands.

Benny is also our new Human
Resources and Indigenous Program
Specialist, who has a wealth of
experience in diversity employment,
specialising in Aboriginal and
Torres Strait Islander Workforce
Development. Benny has enjoyed
his first year here, working on
the employment program and
implementing strategy on retention
and career pathways. In 2017,
Benny is looking forward to further
exploring the opportunities for
growth in Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander workforce development.

If you'd like to contact Benny
about Aboriginal and Torres Strait
Islander Workforce Development
opportunities, please email
benjamin.eggmolesse@svha.org.au.

Staff Achievements



**ODESSA
SAUKURU**
.....

Odessa Saukuru, whose mob is from Murray Island, has been the friendly face of the O'Brien Centre reception here at St Vincent's for almost two years.

Towards the end of last year Odessa was nominated by her manager to complete a Certificate IV in Mental Health, run by the Mental Health Coordinating Council in the Sydney suburb of Penrith. Over the 9 months, Odessa learnt about the models of mental health and how they can be applied to her workplace. The practical learning style was what Odessa enjoyed most about the course, as well as the teachers who were highly skilled and engaging. Odessa attributes the successful completion of

“**The practical learning style was what Odessa enjoyed most about the course, as well as the teachers who were highly skilled and engaging.**”

her certificate to her deadly colleagues at the O'Brien Centre, who supported her every step of the way. The collaborative partnership that exists between the clinical and non-clinical staff enabled Odessa to build upon her studies and further her knowledge in mental health. Odessa makes special mention to Clinical Psychologist, Raquel Zilberman, who provided her with excellent clinical supervision and strong mentorship. Odessa's future plans are to study Enrolled Nursing then go on to complete a Bachelor of Nursing, and eventually specialise in Mental Health. So continue to watch this space – we know Odessa will be a game changer in Mental Health!



**CALLIE
NOAKES**
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Callie Noakes, one of our registered nurses on Xavier 9 South, our Bone Marrow Transplant/ Haematology and Oncology Unit, won the “Excellence in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Healthcare Award” for excellence in Nursing and Midwifery 2016.

Callie's award is in recognition of her excellence in practice and the significant contribution she has made to the nursing profession, her team and to the patients she cares for.



**PAULINE
DEWEERDT**
.....

Congratulations to Pauline Deweerdt who received a Finalist award for the Best People in Health and Ageing and a Finalist Chairman's award at the Innovation Excellence Awards 2016 for her work in implementing the Respect the Difference Training.

As part of her submission, Pauline designed a poster, detailing the implementation of the training, the outcomes for staff and future recommendations. Read on to find out more about Respect the Difference training and the positive impacts it has had on our staff. Great work Pauline!



Social Work

Social Work Professional Educator, Paul Andrews, says there were two big and exciting things that happened this year and he wants you to know about them!

This year St Vincent's offered social work placements to two Aboriginal students from the University of NSW. The placement offered supervised practical experience, mentorship and an opportunity to experience life as a social worker at St Vincent's. In return, St Vincent's was blessed with input from young and vibrant individuals passionate about social work. Paul aims to grow this part of

the field education program in 2017 and offer more placement opportunities to Aboriginal social work students!

Do you know about culturally safe work spaces? No? Well you will soon. Research is currently being done in the Social Work Department on how to build culturally safe spaces for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social work students. This means creating an environment of mutual

respect, where people share knowledge and work together to value the identity and culture of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Social Work will team up with the Aboriginal Health Unit, Aboriginal social work academics and the local community to create this space. The team hopes the knowledge built can be shared with field educators in other disciplines as well as through the entire St Vincent's workforce.

ST VINCENT'S VISIT

(right) The Governor with his wife and a patient.
(far right) Anthony, Pauline and the Governor



Governor Hurley visits St Vincent's

In April of 2016, St Vincent's was proud to host the Governor of NSW, The Honourable David Hurley and his wife, Mrs Hurley on a private tour to showcase our Aboriginal health initiatives. Led by A/Prof Anthony Schembri, CEO and Pauline Deweerdt, Director of Aboriginal Health, the

couple spoke with many of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and met one of our young Aboriginal patients, who was recovering from a heart transplant.

The visit came at the request of the Governor and provided an important opportunity to demonstrate our commitment to Closing

the Gap in health care and employment, and share our ideas for continual improvement.

Following the tour, the Governor and Mrs Hurley joined St Vincent's staff, representatives from St Vincent's Health Australia as well as the St Vincent's Board members for an informal social event.

Reconciliation The Journey

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In 2016 the very first SVHA
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander
Forum was held in Brisbane.

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ABORIGINAL HEALTH WORKERS

(top right) Nathan
Taylor and Victoria
Kennedy

The forum, entitled **Reconciliation – The Journey**, was a gathering of all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and leaders from across the organisation. The vision of the forum was to empower each and every staff member to work harmoniously with one another, in a spirit of trust and openness to bring about love, hope, healing, justice and

peace in the community.

Over the two days, staff members were able to connect with and empower each other as well as share knowledge on processes and strategies to enhance Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health and wellbeing. The forum was deadly successful and we look forward to the next gathering!

HELPING HAND

(right) Susan,
Pauline, Sylvia
and Erin.
(far right) Susan
& patient



A helping hand from pharmacy

Susan Welch, Senior Pharmacist Research, along with a team of experts, have developed a way for staff to easily identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients staying in hospital.

When patients identify themselves as being Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander, an image of the Aboriginal Flag appears next to their name in an online system used by all clinicians in the hospital. The icon is used by many staff members to identify Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients and

provide them with culturally appropriate support and access to resources. Pharmacy use the icon to provide patients with education on medication practices and how to access medication support from the community including Close the Gap.

The Pharmacy team wrote a research paper on this initiative which was published in the Australian Medical Journal and was accepted for oral presentation at the 2016 SVHA Medicines Management Conference in Perth. Well done Pharmacy!

**ANNA
NOLAN**

Aboriginal
Nurse
Educator



Educating our future nurses

Anna Nolan, an Aboriginal Nurse Educator, provides education and support to both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal nursing staff.

Anna has over nine years' experience as a nurse at St Vincent's, and is loving her new role as a teacher. As part of her position, Anna coordinates the Aboriginal Nursing and Midwifery Cadetship, a NSW Health initiative. The Cadetship program provides current Aboriginal nursing students with the opportunity to gain extra practical experience at St Vincent's Hospital. The program offers support from an Aboriginal mentor as well as from Anna, in her role as coordinator.

Our first cadet/student began in 2016 and is being mentored by Callie Noakes. If you would like to find out more about the Cadetship program, please visit <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/nursing/aboriginal-strategy/Pages/aboriginalcadetships.aspx>. Anna Nolan, an Aboriginal Nurse Educator, provides education and support to both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal nursing staff.

Hello from 9 south

Anna Roberts, the administration office on level 9 South, grew up in Moree and moved to the inner city suburb of Waterloo when she was 11 years old.

Anna is has worked in the Hospital for just over a year now and says that the challenges that come with working in health make every day different and exciting. Anna enjoys rising to these challenges and learning from them with the support of her team. Anna loves everything about her job here, especially building a relationship with the patients and being able to support them during their hospital stay.

A drive-along with justin

JUSTIN DUNN



Justin has been working with our Patient Transport team for just over a year now, and has recently completed his Certificate III in Transport.

Justin loves his role, describing it as feeling more like a hobby rather than a job. Justin's experience with patient transport services is a personal one. He has fond memories of joining his dad, who also works in health, on transport journeys and remembers always being intrigued by the process. Justin was previously working in construction when he decided a change was needed, and ended up here, following his Father's footsteps by working in health. Justin smiles when he says "dad is very proud". Justin's friendly nature and cheeky smile make him a hit with the patients and a popular member of the Transport team. When asked if he likes working with the patients, Justin replies "Yeah, it feels like I'm giving back in a way". A day in Justin's role is never the same. A drive could be as close as across the road at Sacred Heart, or as far as to the boarder of NSW and QLD. No matter what, Justin is ready to go! Make sure you give Justin a wave as if you see him passing one of our hospitals!

mKICA

Pauline, Danielle
and Cindy



the mKICA

Occupational Therapist, Danielle Gately, noticed that the cognitive assessment used to test thinking skills was not suitable for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients.

“ **The Kimberly Indigenous Cognitive Assessment was developed as a tool for measuring the cognitive abilities of Aboriginal and Strait Islander people.** ”

As a result, Danielle and her supervisor Cindy, began investigating more appropriate methods of assessment. The Kimberly Indigenous Cognitive Assessment was developed as a tool for measuring the cognitive abilities of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This was then reviewed by Prince of Wales Hospital, who developed the mKICA, the Modified Kimberly Indigenous Assessment. After discussing the mKICA with Pauline and patients, Danielle and Cindy decided to implement it at St Vincent's, with the support of the SVHA Multidisciplinary Grant, that the team was awarded earlier this year. The tool includes Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific questions and pictures which have been well received by our patients. Great work OT!



Vinnies first physio grad

PHYSIO-THERAPISTS

Scott Daley (right),
and Steve Bradley
(far right).

Scott is the first Aboriginal physiotherapy graduate here at St Vincent's. Scott was born and bred in Blacktown and his family are the Yuin people of Wreck Bay. Scott studied Sports Science at Australian Catholic University before completing his Masters in Physiotherapy at Sydney University. Scott began the graduate program this year, and has already had experience in three areas; orthoptics, rehabilitation and intensive care. As part of his graduate role, Scott also provides mentorship to the current Aboriginal cadet, who will go on to become a physiotherapy graduate next year. Scott loves his role as a graduate and especially enjoys being a mentor as he believes it is an important component of the program.



Building healthy communities

Physiotherapist Steve Bradley, along with Orthopaedic Surgeon, Brett Courtenay, operate an orthopaedic clinic at Redfern Aboriginal Medical Centre (AMS) for the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. The clinic's practical approach aims to empower individuals to combat their health concerns by completing simple exercises at home and to offer them an expert orthopaedic opinion and/ or surgery. The clinic has been operating for approximately 3 years now, and Steve attributes part of its success to the willingness and determination of the patients to improve their health. The clinic operates fortnightly on Wednesday afternoons. For more information on the service, please contact the Redfern AMS on 9319 5823 or visit www.amsredfern.org.au.

Close the gap day

LAUNCH

Our CEO's Toby, Robert, Anthony and John at the RAP launch



National Close the Gap Day is a day where we at St Vincent's stop to reflect on whether we are doing all we can to reduce the disparity between our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and non-Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander communities. In 2016, St Vincent's along with our sister hospitals, St Vincent's Private Hospital and the Mater Hospital came together to celebrate our achievements since our first National Reconciliation Action

Plan was launched in 2010. More importantly, we took the opportunity to share how we intend to directly address the issues that continue to undermine the health and well-being of our Nation's First Peoples in the future.

We were joined by CEO of St Vincent's Health Australia, Mr Toby Hall who officially launched the new 2016 Reconciliation Action Plan for St Vincent's nationally, along with Sydney CEOs A/Prof Anthony Schembri, Robert Cusack and John Pitsonis.

PERFORMANCE

Garraway Dance Troupe



National Sorry Day & Reconciliation Week

The 26th May is National Sorry Day – a day that acknowledges the mistreatment of Australia's First Peoples. Leading into National Reconciliation Week 27th May 3rd June, St Vincent's commemorates National Sorry Day and Reconciliation Week every year, to share our vision of a unified Australia. This

year, St Vincent's Darlinghurst Campus was privileged to hear one man's story – Mr Greg Davison, who gave us an insight into his life and experiences as one of our nation's Stolen Generation. After telling his story, Greg answered questions from the crowd, and gave the non-Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander audience members

a better understanding of the personal, social, and mental health impact on not just this one man, but an entire generation of Aboriginal people.

Following Greg's talk, we were thrilled to welcome the Garraway Dance Troupe from St Vincent's College in Potts Point who uplifted our spirits with traditional dance.



PERFORMANCE

Uncle Max
performing
the smoking
ceremony

NAIDOC WEEK

Of all the significant dates in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander calendar, **NAIDOC Week** is traditionally the biggest celebration here at St Vincent's, and 2016 was no different.

Each day saw a different event – a flag raising ceremony to start off the week; a special NAIDOC Week grand medical rounds lecture from Prof Peter MacDonald who runs a cardiology clinic for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander patients in rural Australia; and a reconciliation themed Mass. On the final day of celebrations, St Vincent's was privileged to host some very special guests – Uncle Max who performed a traditional Smoking Ceremony, cleansing our Hospital of bad spirits; Auntie Fay who welcomed us to Country; and local band Pirra, who's lead vocalist is a proud Luritja woman and beautifully talented singer – a perfect way to celebrate this year's NAIDOC Week theme – Songlines: The living narrative of our nation.



Social worker, Sophie Blake, says she feels at home with Aboriginal people. Sophie grew up in the Northern NSW town of Kempsey, where she connected with the local Aboriginal people by showing a respect and understanding of their culture. Sophie's special relationship with these people inspired her to become a social worker with a special interest in working with Aboriginal people around their health, safety and social wellbeing. In Sophie's current role as a social worker in the Emergency Department and Intensive Care Unit, she often meets Aboriginal patients experiencing crisis such as homelessness or chronic illness.

Life in the Emergency Department

SOPHIE BLAKE

Social worker



Dalarinji

Aboriginal Health is a major priority for us here at St Vincent's so we created a Committee for focusing on just this! The Committee is co-chaired by Aunty Fay and our CEO, Anthony Schembri and includes staff from all across the hospital. The aim of Dalarinji is to promote access to services and promote staff engagement to improve the health of Aboriginal people.

Medical imaging department's gift of a lifetime

Taking our **commitment of caring** for the marginalised to the next level, St Vincent's Medical Imaging Department have put their money where their mouth is.

The team have committed to sponsoring an Aboriginal student from North

Arnhem Land, through a scholarship for the duration of his secondary education at Scots College, here in Sydney. The scholarship covers tuition and boarding for his high school years 7 – 12. The Scots College offers an education to Indigenous boys who demonstrate leadership and/or academic potential and are committed, with the support of their families, to achieving excellence in their lives. This scholarship will see this young student's opportunities expand to a future of his own design. With the support of the school, his family, a dedicated mentor and the foresight and generosity of the Medical Imaging team, this young man's future is looking bright. Dr Lisa Tarlinton, is quick to point out that this scholarship is a very much a departmental initiative, "This sponsorship is a result of all our staff at every level in the department". Service Manager, Diagnostics Pat Buick concurs, "What we do isn't just about revenue. Social responsibility is part of our operational plan, everyone is excited." To eliminate obligatory pressure, the sponsors remain anonymous to the student, but the Medical Imaging team will receive ongoing updates on his progress throughout his high school years, which started in 2016. The team may have just kicked off the future of the first Aboriginal Prime Minister.

HOMELESS HEALTH

The homeless health team with minister Bradley Hazzard



Homeless health

Lee has been at St Vincent's for four years and he is **devoted to improving health outcomes** for both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal people through smoking cessation.

Lee previously coordinated the ACT and NSW Aboriginal Quitline. Now he manages the Homeless Assertive Outreach Team, which provides support and access to services for both Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal people sleeping rough. Lee works tirelessly with various partners to provide holistic healthcare, education and care coordination to our homeless

community. Twice a year, the Outreach Team, along with other partners, count the number of people living on the streets in the City of Sydney. The latest figures show that there are approximately 813 people living on the streets or in hostels, with about 17% percent of these people identifying as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander. Lee has worked closely with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who have been sleeping rough, and has provided them with support, which has included linking them with community Elders, and in some cases, connecting them back to Country. If you or someone you know would like more information about the Homeless Health Service, please contact the Homeless Health Service intake link on 1800 602 417 or 02 83821512.

A step towards reconciliation

This year St Vincent's Health Australia's Employment Parity Initiative was **launched by Senator The Honourable Nigel Scullion**, Minister for Indigenous Affairs.



RECONCILIATION

Minister for Indigenous Affairs, Nigel Scullion with Pauline Deweerdt and SVHA Chairman, Paul Robertson

This event, attended by many of our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff, marked another step towards reconciliation. Our commitment is that in 5 years' time, 500, or 3%, of employees across all of our facilities, will be from Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander background. This figure is a proportionate reflection of the size of Australia's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population and we would like

our facilities to best reflect the communities which we serve.

The Employment Parity sits within the new Reconciliation Action Plan which was also released in 2016. The Action Plan supports our vision of a community where Aboriginal and other Australians have a shared sense of place through equity, inclusion and the provision of opportunities for all people.

Tierney House

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Cameron French, Manager of Tierney House, recalls the **story of an Aboriginal Patient, John***, who was ostracised from his family and community after coming out as gay.

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John then fled to Sydney, where he stayed for 16 years, couch surfing and sleeping rough. After a serious foot injury, John spent some time in Tierney House where he was involved in cooking, photography and painting. John became so moved by the atmosphere at Tierney House, that he made the decision to call his mum, whom he had not spoken to in over 15 years. John then returned to Country to his family, where he met his nieces and nephews for the first time. The artwork below were created by John and tell the story of his physical and emotional recovery at St Vincent's.



TIERNEY HOUSE

Gail Sellman



Gail recalls this moment as clear as day. She remembers lying on the bench, watching the business people walking past, and thinking "Wow. Do I want to be like them or like this?" Shortly after, Gail was found by the Sisters who then cared for her and connected her with services that led to the reuniting of Gail and her sister.

Gail is many things; a Bunda woman from Bundaberg in Queensland, a mother, a Peer Support worker, a friend, a source inspiration for the clients of Tierney House and a proud Maroons and Cowboys supporter. But it is Gail's lived experience of homelessness, drug use, sexual assault, domestic violence and crime that provide her with a depth of wisdom that is beyond invaluable to the residents and the staff at Tierney House. Gail has a personal conviction that her life is to be one of service for the betterment of all people and that compassion is not compassion unless

you are willing to roll up your sleeves and do something. This conviction drives her in her role every day and allows her to "pour hope into the hearts that are feeling lifeless". In Gail's role, she is an advocate for those whose voice has been lost along the way, and she empowers them to make the right choices.

Gail speaks fondly of the connections she has made with the staff here. She is very grateful to her manager, Cameron French, for giving her the opportunity of a lifetime, and extends her gratitude to all her colleagues who have welcomed her so beautifully. Connecting with staff that identify as Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander is vital for Gail, and something that she treasures.

Despite the numerous and beyond challenging experiences faced by Gail, she remains grateful for her past, as if it had been any different, she may not be where she is today.

Gail's Story

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"Darling girl, I've been watching you for a few days. You are so precious and this is not your destiny."

.....

Gail Sellman will never forget these words. Seeking solace in Green Park, Gail lay exhausted, after taking copious amounts of drugs which resulted in her being awake for days on end. These are the words that the Sisters of Charity said to her when they first found her at 17 years old and only 40 kilograms.

Respecting the difference

Improving outcomes for our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients through **cultural awareness** and **respect**.

Summary

In 2014/15, St Vincent's Health Network Sydney (SVHNS) engaged Mirri Mirri, an Indigenous owned company specialising in the delivery of Cultural Education Workshops, to deliver the Respecting the Difference Aboriginal Cultural Training Framework to our staff. This unique training initiative has been designed to increase staff cultural competencies by improving awareness and understanding of Aboriginal cultures, customs and protocols, which are vital to improving the health outcomes of our Aboriginal patients.

1,504

SVHNS staff have completed the workshop as of August 2016

Implementation



PAUL SINCLAIR

Workshop facilitator

Two modalities of training were rolled out across the Network based on the NSW Health Respecting the Difference Aboriginal Cultural Training Framework: The NSW Health e-learning component and SVHNS face-to-face full day training. The roll-out was phased to ensure the elearning is complete prior to the workshop. The approach of the workshops is to provide a mutually respectful environment for staff to learn about Aboriginal culture and the necessary skills for working with and delivering services to Aboriginal and Torres

Outcomes

This training has not only increased awareness and genuine understanding of the experiences of Aboriginal people in our health services and in the community, it has also generated robust and thoughtful conversation about how staff can improve care for Aboriginal people. The training, especially the face-to-face workshops have been well accepted by staff, and the feedback has been positive about the training experience. Staff are highly motivated and choosing to do the training, and great word of mouth has lead to high demand for training sessions.

“ It was a very vivid and thought provoking workshop. One of the best I have ever been to in 40 years of work ”

Strait Islander people and communities. The face-to-face workshops include both NSW Health generic and localised content relating to local Aboriginal people, their culture and their health, and involve maximising participation through games and positive learning experiences

Other Research

Graduate Health Management Trainee, Sara McKay, undertook a workplace research project that looked at the factors that influence staff access to Respecting the Difference Training. Clinicians, non-clinicians and managers participated in focus groups to discuss the factors that facilitated or acted as barriers to people accessing training. Sara's project identified factors such as resource availability, manager support, workload, workplace culture, perception of relevance, experience of training and messages about the training impact on staff access. Another finding was that participants reported being highly supportive of the training and actively encouraged other staff to attend. Great find Sara!

A Yarn

with Aunty Fay



We caught up with **Aunty Fay**, Co-Chair of the Dalarinji Committee to find out what she likes most about working with St Vincent's.

What region do your people come from?

My people are the Nugunnawal clan of the Wiradjuri Nation. Pudman was the Birthplace of my Nan and Narrandera, also the Wiradjuri Nation was my Grandfather's birthplace.

What is your current role?

I am employed as the Aboriginal Community Liaison officer (called ACLOs) for the Department of Education.

How long have you been involved with St Vincent's?

I became involved with St Vincent's through Walla Mulla, so maybe two years, not too sure.

What do you like most about working with St Vincent's?

The dedication and commitment of all staff that I have encountered and the determination to improve outcomes of both Aboriginal and Torres Strait people and to increase cultural awareness.

What is it like being the co-chair of the Dalarinji Committee?

DEADLY and proud to be.

What are some of the highlights for you this year in regards to Aboriginal Health?

The SVHA Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander forum in Brisbane on the 26 and 27 October this year and the St Vincent's Health Employment Parity Initiative.

What areas of Aboriginal Health need to be focused on in 2017?

Not being a medical person, all I can say is that my people suffer with Cardiac issues which I believe is a major health concern.

Empowering Our Patients



NATHAN TAYLOR

Tubbah Gah
Clan member

Nathan Taylor began his role as an Aboriginal Health Worker in February 2016 and has never looked back.

Nathan is part of the Tubbah Gah Clan

from the Wiradjuri Nation in Central NSW and is about to commence his third year of a Bachelor of Human Sciences majoring in Public Health at Macquarie University.

As part of his role here, Nathan provides social, cultural and emotional support to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients. Nathan says it's the best job he's ever had, not only because he is able to provide support to his people, but also because of the empowering and supportive nature of the Aboriginal Health Unit. Nathan believes that good health and wellbeing are integral to life, and he enjoys supporting his people in achieving this.

“**Nathan provides social, cultural and emotional support to our Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients.**”

The job of a lifetime

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Yvette Kirby tells her us story and what it's like working at St Vincent's.
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BACKGROUND

I am a proud Wiradjuri woman, born in Wagga Wagga. I also call Lake Cargelligo my home. I came to Sydney in 2001 to attend high school however I left in year 8 due to being homesick. In 2005 I gave birth to my daughter who is now 11 years old. She is the reason I strive to become a better person than I was yesterday. I've always been proud of my efforts in life, being independent and being a positive role model for her.

YVETTE KIRBY

.....
IBAC
Administration
Support

ROLE AT ST VINCENT'S

I began my role as Administration Support for the Viral Hepatitis Clinic at the beginning of 2015. I take care of all admin duties for the Viral Hep clinics managing 3 consultants and 1 registrar. On the busiest day we could see up to 60 patients walk through the door in 4 hours. From day one I've thoroughly enjoyed working here and being part of a great unit within St Vincent's. I am blessed with a great manager and a phenomenal team of fellow admin staff, clinicians and nurses.

I love every part of my role at IBAC. Most of all I love seeing the patients and connecting with them, hearing their stories and sharing mine, which I am able to do because of my life experiences thus far.

MOST EXCITING MOMENT

1st of March 2016 marks the date when the Australian Government listed new generation treatments on the Pharmaceutical Benefits Scheme for Australians living with Hepatitis C. It also positioned Australia as a world leader in publically-funded access to the new, highly effective medications. With a 90-95% cure rate, I am discharging people from clinics each week cured from the virus. It is one of the most rewarding things to be a part of which leaves me feeling so lucky to have gained employment here at St Vincent's and particularly within IBAC. I think it will always be a highlight of my working life.

Connecting with mob

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Victoria's family are the
Ngiyampaa Tribe, one of three
traditional owners of Lake Mungo.
.....

Victoria has worked for St Vincent's for almost 2 years in a variety of areas including the Quitline and the Stimulant Treatment Program, all of which have provided her with



VICTORIA KENNEDY

.....
Aboriginal
Health Worker

invaluable experience. However, it is Victoria's newest role as an Aboriginal Health Worker that she describes as her "dream job".

As part of her role, Victoria visits Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients to ensure they feel welcome and safe in hospital. Victoria says the best part of her job is being able to connect with mob and be a part of their health journey.

If you would like support from **Victoria**, or **Nathan**, please let one of our staff know or call **8382 2213**.

**PETER
MACDONALD**

The heart of
Condobolin



The heart of Condobolin

.....

This year marks the **10th anniversary** of the cardiac outreach service run by Peter Macdonald, in Condobolin, located in the heart of NSW.

.....

Peter Macdonald, Medical Director of the Heart Transplant Unit and Head of the Transplantation Research Laboratory at the Victor Chang Cardiac Research Institute, provides pre and post care to transplant patients from all across NSW and interstate. Ten years ago, an Aboriginal patient and his wife informed Peter of the lack of cardiac services in Condobolin despite the need for them. Peter was moved by this story, and in December 2006, flew to Condobolin to run the first of many cardiac outreach clinics. The most challenging thing about the Aboriginal community in Condobolin is the lifestyle issues they experience. Many people have multiple risk factors such as smoking and obesity and have a very strong family history of cardiac disease that it seems almost inevitable. However, Peter says that the Aboriginal people of Condobolin are warm and welcoming, and slowly their attitudes towards health are changing. The future is looking bright!

**FREYA
RAFFAN**

Author of
Deadly Yarn'n



Yarn'n with the author

.....

My name is Freya Raffan and I am a Graduate Health Management Trainee and the **author of Deadly Yarn'n**.

.....

I grew up in the Ku-ring-gai area of Sydney, right on the edge of the bush, with my mum, dad and sister. Prior to being involved in this newsletter, I had not met many Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people and the only things I knew about their history and culture was what I had learnt at school. This all changed when I was given the opportunity to create Deadly Yarn'n, along with Pauline Deweerd and Nikki Potent (co-author), whose contribution and support was instrumental. Through this experience, I was privileged enough to meet many wonderful people, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, whose stories and achievements inspired and challenged me in both my work

and personal life. I also had the pleasure of learning more about Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander history and culture, which resulted in a deeper appreciation of our country's First People. The development of this newsletter has been an overwhelmingly positive and invaluable experience for me, however it has also highlighted the many health related inequalities faced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people today. Meeting our staff and hearing their stories has turned my interest in closing the gap in healthcare and other inequalities into a passion and I look forward to furthering my relationship with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community and working towards reconciliation.



NATIONAL RECONCILIATION ARTWORK

Reconciliation: Towards excellent health, happiness and equality, 2016



Each of the small circles was created by one of 48 St Vincent's staff members. The circles were collaborated into one artwork by three Aboriginal artists to symbolise people coming together to focus on our shared vision for reconciliation. The three artists then painted around the circles with bands of black, red, yellow, blue and purple.



Each artist added their own reconciliation symbols, signs or words to one panel by scratching into the red lines. Vicki Couzens represents Victoria in the left panel, Jeffrey Samuels represents New South Wales in the centre and Bianca Beetson represents Queensland and the Torres Strait Islands in the right panel.

Thank you

And **that's a wrap for 2016**. We hope you have enjoyed the inaugural edition of Deadly Yarn'n. Thank you to all of those who contributed stories to the newsletter. May your journey through life continue to inspire others.

2016



St Vincent's
leading the way in
Aboriginal Health

2016

If you have any questions
please feel free to contact the
Director, Aboriginal Health
(02) 8382 1111