



Priority Area:

ABORIGINAL HEALTH



17,906 or 4.7%

of patients in our region identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander



2,765 or 19.24% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander patients had a 715 Health Check

567 practice interactions by our Aboriginal Liaison Officer

31,485 Integrated Team Care (ITC) care coordination services

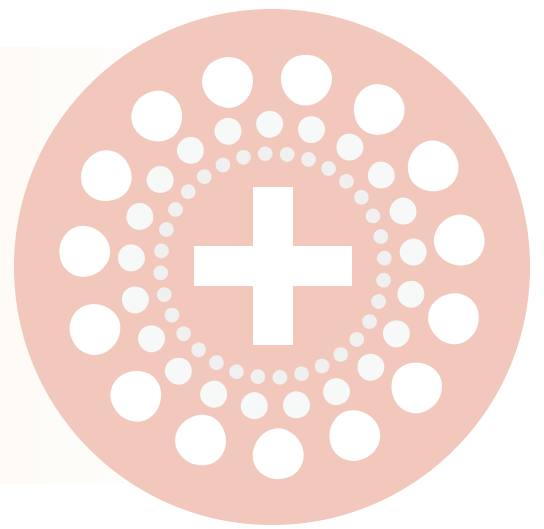
405 people assisted through ITC services

158 patient consultations through the psychiatry clinic delivered at Greater Western Aboriginal Health Service

2,000+ NAIDOC Cup participants

OUR VISION FOR RECONCILIATION

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' community needs, interests and priorities are embedded in our everyday business and cultures to improve the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in our community. We aim to work with other healthcare providers across the region, through our commissioning and partnership leader role, to build communities of healthcare practice that recognise, support and empower Aboriginal peoples and communities.



RECONCILIATION ACTION PLAN

Our Innovate Reconciliation Action Plan (RAP) has continued to provide the framework for the activities and initiatives our organisation has undertaken to implement our reconciliation vision. Our RAP Working Group is comprised of staff from across the organisation, who lead and guide our RAP initiatives together with key stakeholders. Our second Innovate Reconciliation Plan is currently in progress.

- 13 RAP Working Group members
- 3 RAP meetings held

Find out more:

nbmphn.com.au/RAP



Mitch Beggs Mowczan.

ABORIGINAL LIAISON OFFICER

Our Aboriginal Liaison Officer Mitch Beggs Mowczan, provides support, training and cultural guidance to our organisation and practices across our region. Mitch is a Wiradjuri man who was born and raised on Darug land. Mitch has worked in Aboriginal Health for 13 years.

- 567 practice interactions across the region. Mitch works with practices to improve cultural safety in primary care and provides information regarding 715 Health Checks and services available in the region for Aboriginal people

Find out more:

nbmphn.com.au/AboriginalHealth

STAFF AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Our staff regularly participate in community and cultural events across the region. This helps us to build relationships with local Aboriginal communities and to identify some of the barriers Aboriginal people face in accessing health services.

- Aboriginal Liaison Officer attended 39 Village Cafés to connect with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members
- 7 staff volunteered at NAIDOC Cup Hunters Field, helping to coordinate a day of sport and culture for approximately 2,000 school children
- Our staff regularly attend NAIDOC Jamison Park, which was unfortunately cancelled in 2022 due to flooding, however a smaller event was held at Penrith City Council
- All staff receive a Cultural Awareness Training day provided by Mitch Beggs Mowczan and Eliza Pross from Ochre and Salt

Find out more:

nbmphn.com.au/AboriginalHealth or [see Highlights](#)



Cultural Awareness Training day.



ABORIGINAL CULTURAL AWARENESS TRAINING

Mitch Beggs Mowczan together with Eliza Pross (Ochre and Salt) delivered accredited Aboriginal Cultural Awareness training to general practice and mental health professionals in our region, as well as internal staff.

Three separate modules are available. Modules 1 and 3 are both 2-hour online, self-paced learning modules. Module 2 is a 3-hour face-to-face or Zoom meeting, where healthcare providers participate in break-out room activities, hear about kinship systems, totems, connection to country, effective engagement in a healthcare setting and much more.

- 60 attendees (including 36 staff)
- 5 training sessions

DEADLY DREAMING

Deadly Dreaming is a 10-week early intervention drug and alcohol cultural program for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander young people that is delivered in high schools across the region and Cobham Juvenile Justice Centre.

The service uses creative and traditional workshops to provide experiences of custom, lore and value systems to build connections and a sense of belonging for young people.

- 9 schools participated in the Deadly Dreaming Program
- 149 young people were assisted through school and holiday programs
 - 123 group sessions conducted through schools
 - 18 group sessions through holiday programs
- 8 group sessions conducted at Cobham Juvenile Justice Centre
- 13 young people assisted at Cobham Juvenile Justice Centre

Find out more:

nbmphn.com.au/DeadlyDreaming

CASE-MANAGEMENT: ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER YOUTH

A service delivered by Ted Noffs Foundation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples aged 12-25 years of age identified as at risk for alcohol and other drug or mental health issues. Services include therapeutic crisis intervention, clinical assessment, treatment planning, counselling and psychological therapy, assistance accessing other services and mentoring.

- 125 clients assisted

Find out more:

nbmphn.com.au/AODYouthCaseManagement

“Very engaging and enlightening, especially regarding culture, totems, connectivity to the land and kinship.”

“Very well done and helpful, objective and practical. By far the best education activity for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples I have done so far!”

“Delivered beautifully. Makes it so much more relevant due to the speaker being of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander heritage. What you are being told is from the heart and experience. Just wonderful.”

“I enjoyed the whole package, its structure and educational value. Recommend it to all other agencies.”

Feedback from Cultural Awareness Training participants

GWAHS ABORIGINAL PSYCHIATRY CLINIC

We partner with the Greater Western Aboriginal Health Service (GWAHS) in Penrith to deliver a specialist psychiatry clinic for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This year, we started a monthly outreach psychiatry clinic at the GWAHS Katoomba location.

- 21 full day clinics
- 158 patient consultations
- 58 new patients

Find out more:

www.gwahs.net.au

INTEGRATED TEAM CARE – CLOSING THE GAP

This program helps Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples with chronic health conditions to access better healthcare, cheaper medicines and culturally appropriate care coordination and support. We commission Nepean Community & Neighbourhood Services to provide this service.

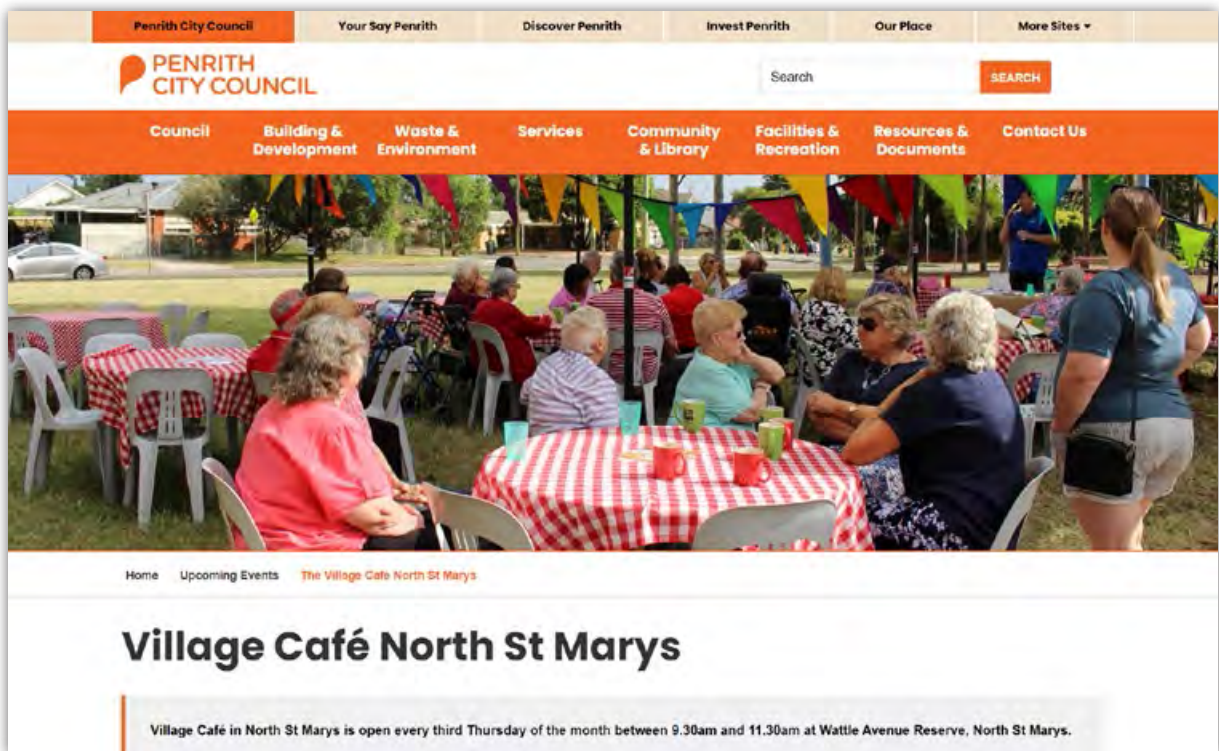
- 5 care coordinators
- 405 patients assisted
- 31,485 occasions of service

Find out more:

nbmphn.com.au/ClosingtheGap or [see Highlights](#)

“Glowing praise of the staff and the cultural support they were able to offer which felt like an extension of the support provided by the Aboriginal outreach workers.”

Client – Integrated Team Care



<https://www.penrithcity.nsw.gov.au/upcoming-events/the-village-cafe-north-st-marys>

THE NEPEAN LINKER PROJECT

This initiative is based at GWAHS and provides culturally appropriate support and holistic care to people with complex mental health and addiction concerns. The Link Worker provides both direct support and linkage to other services including the Penrith Community Hub (WHOS) for drug and alcohol recovery day programs.

- 35 clients assisted

Find out more:

nbmphn.com.au/LinkWorker or [see Highlights](#)

VILLAGE CAFÉ

Village Café is a place to grow community connections and support wellbeing. The Village Café is located in Kingswood, North St Marys, Llandilo and Wallacia and has a number of local supporting partners, including Penrith City Council, Nepean Blue Mountains Local Health District and Community Junction. It is a great opportunity to enjoy barista-made coffee, connect with local community members and engage with local service providers. As an organisation, we have been involved with the Village Café since it first began in 2017 and have seen it grow in each community. This event is important for our community members to avoid social isolation and great for us as a service to keep connected with the community.

- 39 Village Cafés attended by our Aboriginal Liaison Officer

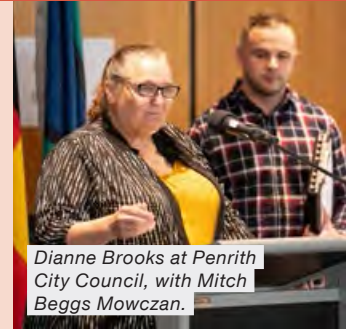


NAIDOC Week at Penrith City Council.

HIGHLIGHTS



Wentworth Healthcare staff at the NAIDOC event at Penrith City Council.



Dianne Brooks at Penrith City Council, with Mitch Beggs Mowczan.



Photos from Penrith City Council.

NAIDOC Cup and NAIDOC Week Penrith City Council

Our staff were excited to once again volunteer at our region's 12th annual NAIDOC Cup event, held at Hunters Field in Emu Plains. This wonderful free, combined school event for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander primary school students is held to give younger children an opportunity to celebrate and learn more about their culture.

It was fantastic to see flourishing numbers return after COVID-19 delayed the event in 2020 and restricted numbers in 2021. Approximately 1,300 children attended to participate in sports such as Oztag and Netball, and various other activities such as Indigenous games, fire-starting workshops, storytelling, song, dance and art activities.

Unfortunately, due to weather and floods in the region, the annual NAIDOC Week Jamison Park event was cancelled for 2022. However, our Aboriginal Liaison Officer Mitch Beggs Mowczan, along with other Wentworth Healthcare staff, were excited to join Penrith City Council, who hosted a fabulous intimate indoor gathering at the Civic Centre, Penrith. Mitch spoke to attendees about the importance of NAIDOC, the year's theme, and recognised those who continue to keep 'getting up, standing up, and showing up' in our local community.



Wentworth Healthcare staff at the NAIDOC Cup.



Mitch Beggs Mowczan speaking at the NAIDOC Cup. Photo by Richard Bully Photography.

NAIDOC Cup at Emu Plains. Photo by Richard Bully Photography.



NAIDOC Cup photos on this page by Richard Bully Photography.

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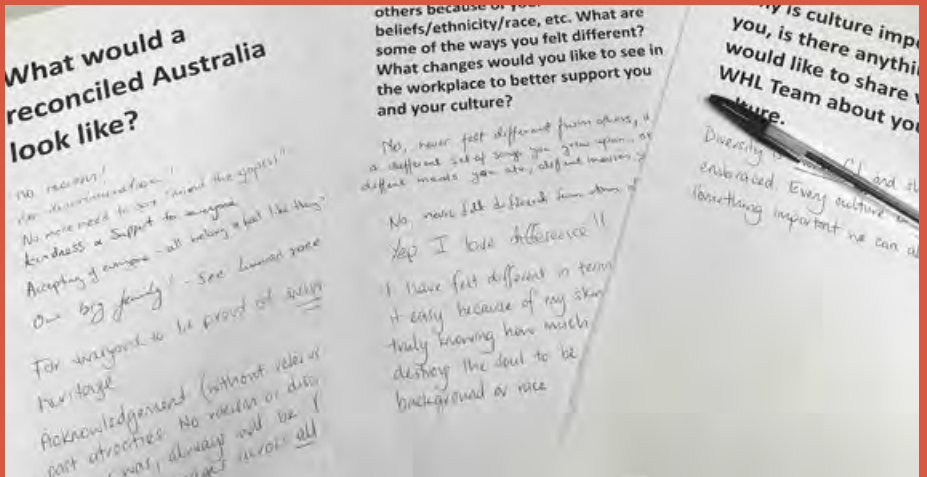
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Reconciliation Week 2023

This year, we commemorated National Reconciliation Week by asking staff to reflect on their own experiences of what Reconciliation means to them. Mitch developed some questions for our staff to prompt and encourage self-reflection. A morning tea was then provided, and all staff were invited to share their responses and learnings with the wider organisation.



Case-Management: Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander youth

Tina is a 16yo descendant of the Darug Aboriginal peoples. She has a complex history of family dysfunction – including parental alcohol and other drug use, instability in adult role models growing up and domestic violence. Additionally, Tina lost her brother to suicide seven years ago.

Tina was referred to the Ted Noffs Foundation by her auntie and was linked to culturally-appropriate support for her drug and alcohol use, escalated behaviours at school, and mental health issues including symptoms of depression and anxiety.

During her comprehensive assessment, Tina reported unresolved feelings of grief, and self-blame relating to her brother's suicide. Tina also reported almost daily use of alcohol and cannabis, as well as daily use of vapes. She shared with the case worker that the use of these substances was primarily assisting her with feeling emotionally overwhelmed, social confidence, and managing her moods, particularly after interacting with her mother whom she had a strained relationship with.

As part of her initial assessment and goal-setting, it was identified that Tina would like assistance with managing her moods at school, staying safe, and reducing her need for alcohol and cannabis. The caseworker engaged with both Tina and her auntie who is her primary caregiver and built the foundations of a therapeutic relationship. She was linked in with the Ted Noffs AOD Counsellor, and both the case worker and counsellor developed a collaborative case management plan. She was also linked in with additional services for ongoing support, such as headspace.

Through the caseworker and counsellor's consistent support over a period of 12 months, Tina reported increased trust of supportive adults, and her emotional regulation had improved. Overall, she receives less detentions at school, demonstrates improved ability to relate to others, improved school attendance, improved thinking, and healthier ways of managing her relationship with her mother.

Integrated Team Care

In August 2022, a 53-year-old man diagnosed with asthma, severe sleep apnoea and gastrointestinal disease and was referred to the Integrated Team Care (ITC) Closing the Gap (CTG) program. Upon visiting the client, it was apparent that he had a multitude of complex needs not indicated in the initial referral. His elderly mother had only passed in the home the week prior due to a fall. Unfortunately, he also suffered complications from recent surgeries on his stomach. The client was also facing possible foreclosure on his home that he had a mortgage on, as he could no longer work in his workplace of 30 years.

It was important for us to listen to his story at this difficult time and provide reassurance. We supported the client to attend the hospital to have his medical needs attended to and helped him access food hampers and outreach support.

Through advocacy, the team were able to secure a donation of high-cost CPAP (continuous positive airway pressure) machines to long term rental clients experiencing financial hardship at no additional cost to the clients or the organisation.

Additionally, the client was encouraged to talk to his GP about counselling, and to seek financial counselling. Six months later and he now has social support through community groups, and is in the process of accessing his super to help pay for his mortgage. He recently contacted his care coordinator quite emotional and stated he didn't know where he would be if we didn't give him the support he needed through that difficult time. He had just wanted to thank the team, care coordinator, outreach and manager for the support he received through the program.

Both the care coordinators and the finance team have worked extremely hard to learn new processes and implement an initiative that has assisted with enhancing specialist referral processes and reducing specialist costs to enable more clients to access the services they need. In response to the high demand for transport services for clients, the team has also created a partnership with Nanima Care, a new Aboriginal transport service with an all-Aboriginal team.

Nepean Community & Neighbourhood Services (NCNS)

Nepean Linker Project

A 23-year-old Aboriginal man was receiving support through the Nepean Linker Project. A care plan was developed and the individual's goals of reducing his regular cannabis use, socialising more often through social interaction group opportunities, and attending regular GP and counselling appointments were identified. The client was referred to Flourish Australia for Psychiatry Services at the Greater Western Aboriginal Health Services (GWAHS) once a week, where he attended case conferences with a GP, psychiatrist and Flourish support worker. He was also linked in with a drug and alcohol counsellor from Odyssey House who visits GWAHS once a week. The client is regularly attending sessions, where he is learning coping techniques and receives ongoing support.

Linkers maintain regular contact with clients for reminders regarding patient appointments and wellbeing checks, which allow for verbal follow up and an opportunity for the linker to receive feedback.