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Artwork: *Janganpa Jukurrpa (Brush-tailed Possum Dreaming)* by Phyllis Napurrurla Williams

This artwork is featured on the following page: [Diabetes](#)

# Communiqué



## Welcome



In September, we marked 28 years of the HealthInfoNet's contribution to providing the evidence base to inform practice and policy nationally. It was a privilege to celebrate our 28 year history and the impact that we continue to have in the sector. See more about this later in the Communiqué.

Early October marked my first year as Director. Reflecting on the last 12 months I am incredibly proud of the work that the HealthInfoNet has achieved. Notably, through our partnership with the Australian e-Health Research Centre at the CSIRO, we have taken steps to thoughtfully consider the *Ethical and practical considerations of integrating AI into Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health care*.

We have also produced a number of Knowledge Exchange Products on *Alcohol use*, childhood bronchiectasis *Review of bronchiectasis among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children and young people (0-18 years old)*,

and *Aboriginal data sovereignty*, across the year as well as publishing our annual *Overview of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health status 2024* with a renewed focus on meeting Indigenous data needs. In addition we added a new portal for Queensland funded by Queensland Health. *Visit the Queensland Portal* to access up-to-date information and culturally appropriate resources on First Nations health in Queensland.

I also had the opportunity to speak with a range of HealthInfoNet users during our online consultation sessions in May. The feedback that users provided reinforced that the HealthInfoNet is critical infrastructure for centralising **trustworthy, culturally safe, and up-to-date health information**. We have been implementing recommendations from the consultations including launching our Deadly Voices series (see below) to showcase the work being done in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health sector.

*The Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters of Australia and the Torres Strait. We respect all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people—their customs and their beliefs. We also pay our respects to Elders past, present and emerging with particular acknowledgment to the Whadjuk people of the Noongar nation, the traditional owners of the lands where our offices are located.*

Also, in October I met with our funders in Canberra, as well as the peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers and Practitioners workers (NAATSIHWP), the team at the Yardhura Walani at the ANU, the Healing Foundation, and the team at Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services. These visits reinforced to me the strength of the work being led by mob and the critical importance of supporting our workforce bodies.



Meeting with RDAA in Perth in October – Peta Rutherford, Bep Uink, Anita Rodrigues Macias and Patrick Daley

## Review of Alcohol use among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples: helping individuals and communities

In August, The Alcohol and Other Drugs Knowledge Centre released a new publication *Review of alcohol use among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples: patterns, impacts and community-led responses*

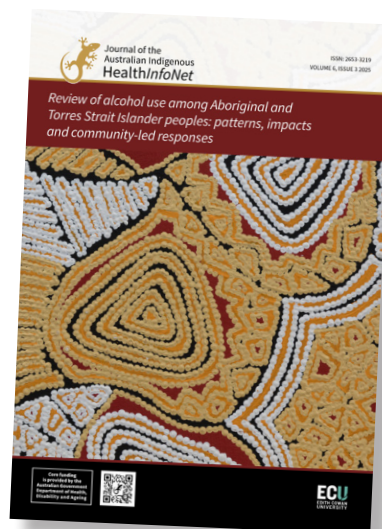
Lead authors Teagan Weatherall, Kylie Lee, Annalee Stearne and James Conigrave said “Moving forward, we need multi-pronged strategies that include the broadest group of interest-holders to meaningfully and respectfully address alcohol use among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. These need to be guided by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and drawn from evidence-based practices and community strengths to ensure programs can be culturally and trauma-informed”. Using the latest research available, this review provides an overview of alcohol use among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It provides a timely and much needed update of the evidence

In December, I will be back in Canberra for the *NACCHO Conference* – if you are around at the conference feel free to drop by our exhibitor stand for a yarn.

In November, I was invited to host a conversation with guest speakers Ash Penfold and Tillara Casey to explore the themes of aspiration, leadership, and the courage to boldly shape our visions for the future. This was the fifth and final event in the *ECU NAIDOC Speaker Series*. This event was framed through the lens of the Djinda Worla–the Stars and Sky Life Layer from ECU’s Cultural Narrative Framework

In December I hosted a panel discussion at a seminar, presented by National Drug Research Institute and the Justice Health Group at Curtin University called *Breaking the cycle: Supporting the wellbeing of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians in prison and post-release*.

previously published in our 2018 review on this same topic, which was one of our most read reviews. In this comprehensive review, the authors have outlined the historical context and scope of alcohol use, the impacts of use on individuals and communities, relevant national policies and strategies and present an overview of efforts to address alcohol use and suggest future directions.



Guests heard about SEWB programs from Assoc Prof Micheal Doyle and about working in post release settings based on research from NDRI researcher Dr Emma Tufuga.

Our team are wrapping up the year and also packing up our offices as we will be located next year across the ECU Joondalup campus and the new ECU City Campus

Wishing you all a relaxing end of year. Have a listen to my short end of year message.

### Professor Bep Uink

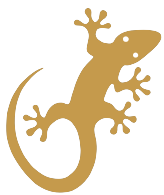


Bep's end of year video message

## New AOD Knowledge Centre reference group

In more AOD news, I am pleased to welcome six new members to the group who have a strong background working in the AOD sector and will bring valuable perspectives to guide the work of the Knowledge Centre. These new members (below) will be a wonderful addition.

- Shenae Parremore (Group Facilitator, Wungening, WA)
- Karina Clarkson (Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Alcohol and other Drug Workforce Education Coordinator, Insight, Qld)
- Kerri-Ann Fletcher (First Nations Support Worker, Goldbridge Rehabilitation, Qld)
- Jacinta Walton (Health Researcher, The Kids Research Institute Australia, WA)
- Raechel Wallace (Aboriginal Program Manager, NADA, NSW)
- Sheena Coughlan (VET Trainer and Assessor, ican learn, Vic)



Journal of the  
Australian Indigenous  
**HealthInfoNet**

## New Editor joins the Journal of the Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet

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*New Editor Dr Kai Wheeler joins the Journal of the Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet*

I am delighted to announce that Dr Kai Wheeler is the new Editor of our Journal following a national expression of interest to head up the Journal Editorial team and coordinate the issues and content peer review.

The Journal holds a special place within the HealthInfoNet and with its extensive international reach, the time is ripe for a fresh approach to take the Journal to the next level and Dr Wheeler's experience and expertise lends itself to this task. It is wonderful to see such interest in our Journal and the high calibre of academic expertise.

Dr Wheeler is a proud Ngarabal person and Accredited Exercise Scientist and specialises in implementation science in partnership with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. His research examines how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities can co-design programs that build community capacity and engage diverse peoples in health and wellbeing.

Dr Wheeler says he was interested in this opportunity because it "promotes the capacity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander researchers to give back to community by co-designing high impact Indigenous-led health and wellbeing initiatives".

Associate Editors also joining the Journal team are Hayley Mongta, Francine Eades, David Sheehan, Tanisha Springall, Bernardo Dewey, Yasmin Johnson, Kate Tompson, Adam Heterick and Stephanie Enkel.

<https://ro.ecu.edu.au/aihjournal/>.

We also farewell Dr Mick Adams, Prof Neil Drew, and HealthInfoNet staff members Darren Deves, Marianne Durbin, Hannah Tarrant and Tam Swan who contributed greatly to the Journal editorial team over the past six years.

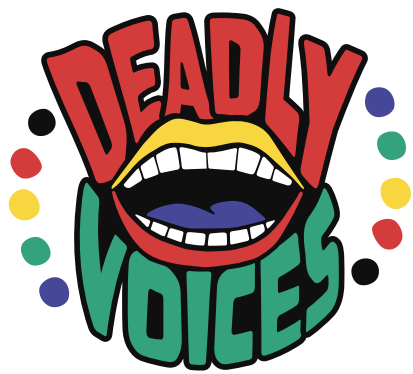


## Congratulations Dr Mick Adams

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I'm delighted to share that our long-standing Advisory Board member, Uncle Mick Adams, has been awarded the inaugural Greg Millan Lifetime Achievement Award at the recent National Men's Gathering as one of the Men's Health Champion Winners, run by the Australian Men's Health Forum.

The award recognised his lifetime contribution to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander men's health. Uncle Mick continues to champion men's holistic health.



**GIVING A VOICE**  
TO THOSE WHO WORK IN ABORIGINAL  
& TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HEALTH

## Deadly Voices - an audio collection of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander health sector voices

This new initiative will give a voice to those who work in Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander health. We want to share your deadly work (research, practice or policy) with the health sector nationally.

Be part of our collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices that will be accessible on our website as a resource.

Promoted on social media and in our newsletters, your bite sized stories will help

inform, educate, support and empower others.

Deadly Voices is a strengths-based narrative of what works, what others need to know and what's new.

Join us and share what you do with others around the place. It all helps to make a difference. Contact us to find out more at [healthinonet.ecu.edu.au/about/deadly-voices/](http://healthinonet.ecu.edu.au/about/deadly-voices/)

## We celebrated 28 years in September



Some of the team celebrating

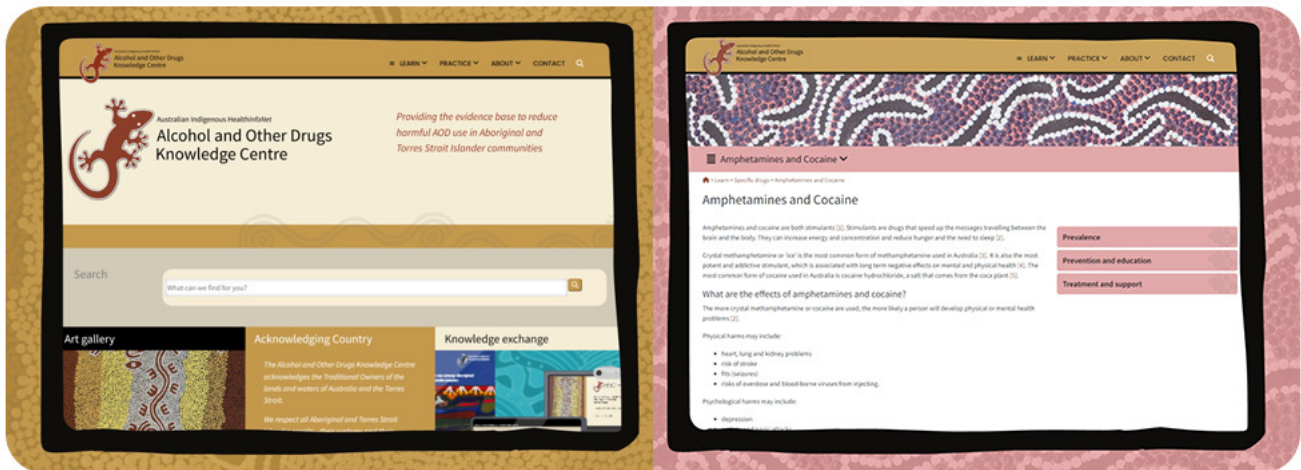


Based at ECU in Perth/Boorloo, WA the HealthInfoNet was established in September 1997 by founding Director, Professor Neil Thomson, a former GP in the Kimberley region of WA, and later a public health researcher in Canberra, ACT. Professor Thomson saw a growing need for a place where all relevant, up-to-date knowledge and information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health could be freely accessed by policy makers and health practitioners.

The need for freely accessible, high-quality information and resources still exists, and the HealthInfoNet continues to provide a trusted and vital service to support the health sector in providing that evidence base to inform practice and policy.

This substantial investment over almost three decades by the Australian Government (Department of Health, Disability and Ageing) is testament to our continued value and use in the sector nationally as a trusted evidence-based series of curated websites. We help to inform best practice and evidence-based decisions to ultimately benefit Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Our national user survey results and recent community consultations reinforce to me the value of our work in providing this unique service. I would also like to extend my gratitude to all our users, other funders, our Advisory Board members, partners and Consultants who continue to support us.

## New AODKC Take a tour video's



Two short take a tour videos were added to the website.

These provide a quick guide on how to use the website and search within a specific topic.

The first is a broad overview of how to search the main website *Take a tour of the AOD Knowledge Centre*

and the other of a specific health topic *Take a tour of AOD Knowledge Centre topics*.

Please share these with your team, play at a staff meeting or add to your staff intranet.

## CSIRO Workshop-Defining AI Opportunities



Ray, Bep, Lucy and Andrew at CSIRO AI workshop in August

Professor Andrew Goodman, Dr Ray Mahoney and Dr Lucy Shinnars Lucy braved the wintery Perth weather to host another workshop with our team late August.

This second workshop had a new aim of outcomes focussed on 'Defining AI opportunities' and helped us plan the next stages in developing a culturally safe AI platform for the HealthInfoNet.

Please read CSIRO's media release about the published report from the first stage

<https://www.csiro.au/en/news/All/News/2025/October/CSIRO-report-highlights-need-for-Indigenous-led-approach-to-AI-in-healthcare>

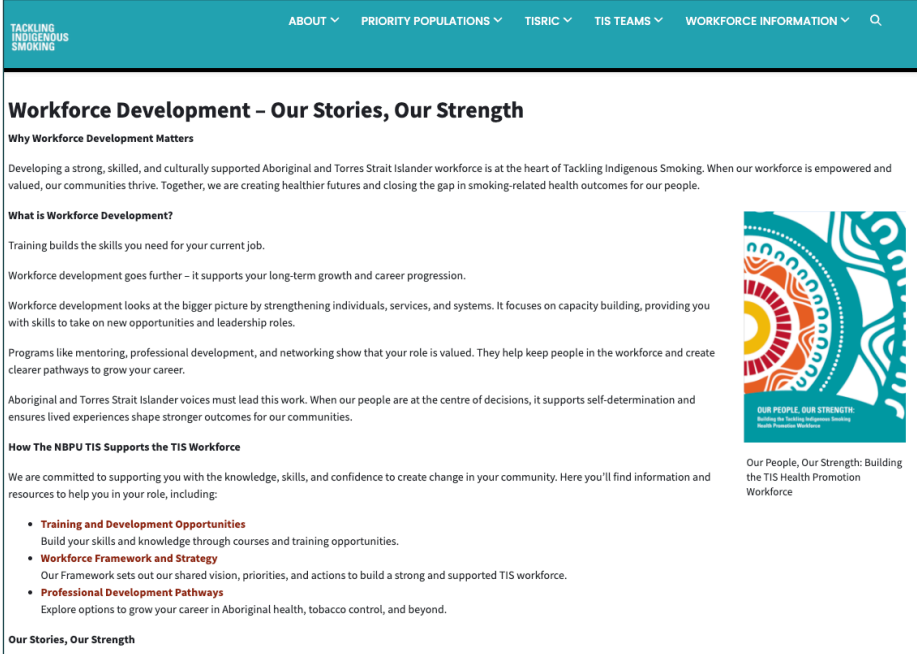


## New resource on the Tackling Indigenous Smoking website

Developing a strong, skilled, and culturally supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce is at the heart of the Tackling Indigenous Smoking (TIS) program.

The new *Workforce Development – Our Stories, Our Strength* page on the TIS website features the *Our People, Our Strength: Building the Tackling Indigenous Smoking Health Promotion Workforce Framework*.

The page also includes information about how the National Best Practice Unit – Tackling Indigenous Smoking (NBPU TIS) supports the TIS Workforce, as well as stories from the TIS Workforce.



**TACKLING INDIGENOUS SMOKING** ABOUT ▾ PRIORITY POPULATIONS ▾ TISRIC ▾ TIS TEAMS ▾ WORKFORCE INFORMATION ▾ Q

### Workforce Development – Our Stories, Our Strength


**Why Workforce Development Matters**  
Developing a strong, skilled, and culturally supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce is at the heart of Tackling Indigenous Smoking. When our workforce is empowered and valued, our communities thrive. Together, we are creating healthier futures and closing the gap in smoking-related health outcomes for our people.

**What is Workforce Development?**  
Training builds the skills you need for your current job.  
Workforce development goes further – it supports your long-term growth and career progression.  
Workforce development looks at the bigger picture by strengthening individuals, services, and systems. It focuses on capacity building, providing you with skills to take on new opportunities and leadership roles.  
Programs like mentoring, professional development, and networking show that your role is valued. They help keep people in the workforce and create clearer pathways to grow your career.  
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander voices must lead this work. When our people are at the centre of decisions, it supports self-determination and ensures lived experiences shape stronger outcomes for our communities.

**How The NBPU TIS Supports the TIS Workforce**  
We are committed to supporting you with the knowledge, skills, and confidence to create change in your community. Here you'll find information and resources to help you in your role, including:

- **Training and Development Opportunities**  
Build your skills and knowledge through courses and training opportunities.
- **Workforce Framework and Strategy**  
Our Framework sets out our shared vision, priorities, and actions to build a strong and supported TIS workforce.
- **Professional Development Pathways**  
Explore options to grow your career in Aboriginal health, tobacco control, and beyond.

**Our Stories, Our Strength**



Our People, Our Strength: Building the TIS Health Promotion Workforce

**Warning:** Please note that this item features the name of a deceased Aboriginal person.

## Vale Dr Charmaine Papertalk Green-Smith

Late August, with deep sadness we acknowledged, the passing of Dr Charmaine Papertalk Green-Smith. Charmaine had strong ties with ECU and the Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet. On behalf of the HealthInfoNet team who met Charmaine many times on her visits to our offices, and for her significant contribution as the first recipient of the Scholarship, I send our respects and deepest condolences to her family.

The HealthInfoNet's second Director, Neil Drew and then Senior Research Fellow, Uncle Mick Adams, instituted the Neil Thomson Scholarship which was jointly funded by ECU and The Lowitja Institute. The recipient of the Scholarship was Charmaine, who was co-supervised at ECU by Uncle Mick Adams and Neil Drew, with Professor Sandy Thompson and Professor Juli Coffin as external supervisors.

Charmaine was awarded her PhD in 2022 which focused on Aboriginal cultural knowledge transmission.

Dr Papertalk Green-Smith was a Yamaji woman whose art and writing was centred around culture, identity and belonging. In 2023, she received the ECU Kurungkurl Katitjin Research Medal for her PhD research. Many of the HealthInfoNet team met Charmaine on her visits to our offices.

## Conferences and workshops

- Notre Dame University Medical student expo, Perth – exhibited
- Oceania Palliative Care conference, Brisbane – exhibited
- SNAICC Conference, Brisbane – exhibited
- APSAD Conference, Sydney - exhibited
- IAHA Conference, Sunshine Coast – exhibited
- NACCHO conference – exhibited



Marianne Durbin on our stand at Notre Dame Smartcare student medical event with a visitor



Natalie Blauensteiner & Darren Deves at OPCC25



SNAICC delegate Deborah Hoger



Raechel Wallace one of our new AODKC reference group members at APSAD.



HealthInfoNet's Tara Hoyne at APSAD



Karina Clarkson at APSAD - one of our new AODKC reference group members



## Social media

Our social media accounts (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn) continue to perform well, consistently achieving above average engagement for our industry (not-for-profit).

We are no longer active on Twitter/X and have moved our efforts to focus on our other existing platforms.

Facebook has shown a growth in engagement, Instagram is growing in followers (almost at 2000), and the HealthInfoNet LinkedIn account recently celebrated surpassing 12,000 followers.

Tackling Indigenous Smoking is now on LinkedIn  
NBPU Tackling Indigenous Smoking: Overview | LinkedIn

[www.linkedin.com/company/nbpu-tackling-indigenous-smoking/](http://www.linkedin.com/company/nbpu-tackling-indigenous-smoking/)

## Staff news

Research Coordinator, Hannah Tarrant, is on maternity leave and welcomed her first child in August. We wish Hannah all the best during this time.

In October, Em Anderton and Anna McGuiness joined our research team. Anna is working remotely from Queensland. Jenny Atthowe also joined the research team on a 3-month contract to assist with our annual Overview.

In early November we also welcomed a new Programs Manager, Atefeh Eshghabadi, a former Pharmacy Services Manager at Joondalup Health Campus. Atefeh will be managing the research team and assisting in implementing recommendations from our community consultation sessions.



*Atefeh Eshghabadi, Programs Manager*



*Em Anderton, Senior Research Officer*



*Some of our research team at the Reconciliation WA Lake Galup walk in October*



*Jenny Atthowe, Research Officer*

# WE ARE MOVING



Our new postal and physical address from  
**15 December 2025**



Australian Indigenous  
**Health/InfoNet**

The Australian  
Indigenous Health/InfoNet  
Edith Cowan University  
Building 2, level 4  
270 Joondalup Drive  
Joondalup WA 6027

## It's Birak season here in Perth/Boorloo

The Nyoongar calendar tell us it's now the season of Birak - First summer (season of the young) December – January. Birak season sees the rains easing, warm weather taking hold and our afternoons being cooled by the sea breezes. Nyoongar calendar - Indigenous Weather Knowledge - Bureau of Meteorology ([bom.gov.au](http://bom.gov.au))

