



IAHA Media Release - Joining the Dots in Allied Health

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Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA), the national peak body representing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health professionals and students, held their first national conference in Brisbane on 22-23 November 2012. Widespread feedback from participants has heralded the conference as a resounding success. With the overarching theme Joining the Dots... An inter-professional approach to Indigenous health, the conference brought together an impressive lineup of keynote speakers as well as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health professionals and students from all over Australia.

"I am so proud to have been part of such an inspiring event," said Ms Faye McMillan, Chairperson IAHA Board. "To have such a high calibre of speakers like Dr Tom Calma, Social Justice Commissioner Mick Gooda, Congress co-chair Jodie Broun and an international guest speaker from New Zealand Riripeti Haretuka give up their valuable time to be part our conference was both humbling and motivating. Our MC Dr Kerry Arabena brought it all together beautifully."

The conference was designed to make delegates think about how allied health professionals and stakeholders can contribute towards a sustainable approach to improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, working in an inter-professional and holistic environment.

"In addition to the keynote speakers, we heard amazing stories from allied health professionals working on the ground," said Ms McMillan. "We have so many remarkable people out there making a difference and the overall feel of the conference was one of unity and collaboration."

Mr Craig Dukes, Chief Executive Officer of IAHA, agrees. "When you bring together that many committed health professionals, from across a diverse range of disciplines, it gives confidence that we can make a significant contribution to closing the gap." said Mr Dukes. "We all recognise that no single profession can improve Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes on its own. We all need to work together and this conference was huge step in the right direction."

"The fact that both the Prime Minister and the Minister for Indigenous Health, the Hon. Warren Snowdon, provided video messages of support for the work of IAHA and allied health professionals was a positive sign." said Mr Dukes. "It demonstrates their ongoing commitment to building and supporting the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander allied health workforce."

For further information about the conference, please visit www.indigenouslyalliedhealth.com.au.

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