

Director's Communiqué

Issue 8:
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Message from the Director

Welcome once again to my Communiqué. As always it has been a very busy time and much has happened since we last spoke. I have had the great pleasure of catching up with many of our partners and friends over the last few months and of initiating some important projects. We have been extremely gratified by the support we have received from a wide range of organisations. Additional funding was received from the Australian Department of Health for the Alcohol and Other Drugs Knowledge Centre. This funding will allow us to produce some exciting enhancements to the resource. The Western Australian Department of Health has renewed funding for the WA Section for a further 12 months. As you will see below we are also in partnership with Curtin University to develop the Preventing Aboriginal Maternal Smoking Portal. We are also working with Menzies School of Health Research on a Women's Health Portal.

Our primary research program continues to grow. It has been an enormous pleasure to have Uncle Mick Adams with us. His wealth of experience and of course his wonderful reputation in the field has been instrumental in the development of many exciting opportunities for research collaboration throughout the country. He has planted

many seeds and some are already beginning to flower. In addition to the many external collaborations, I am particularly pleased that we have developed stronger links to the many ECU researchers working in the field of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health. Under Mick's guidance and with the full support of Professor Colleen Hayward, ECU's Pro Vice Chancellor (Equity and Indigenous) we have a leading role in the development of an ECU Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Research Steering Group. This group will help to ensure that the 'whole is greater than the sum of its parts' in our research endeavours.

We have also embarked on an ambitious project to 'reimagine' the HealthInfoNet web resource. This project will explore ways that we can keep pace with the rapidly changing technological and social media landscape. We are working with an internationally renowned expert in the field to prepare a concept plan. Once we have the broad brush concept plan we will of course engage in an extensive process of consultation with our users to ensure that our plans reflect the needs of an ever changing and challenging workplace.

There are also a number of developments at Edith Cowan University. The University

has a new Vice Chancellor, Professor Steve Chapman. He is undertaking an organisational redesign project to ensure that the University continues to be an innovative and vibrant higher education community. While it is likely that the redesign will have implications for the HealthInfoNet it will not impact our capacity to undertake our vital role in supporting those working to make a positive difference to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health outcomes. We continue to enjoy the full support of the senior officers of the University and my meetings with Professor Chapman reinforced that we are very highly regarded and valued by the University as part of its commitment to supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, communities and organisations.



Professor Neil Drew,
Director

HealthInfoBytes

As part of our commitment to providing the best and most accessible translational research outputs to support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health workforce we have developed our HealthInfoByte series. HealthInfoBytes are short video clips that introduce key health topics and how to access them quickly and easily on our resource. Each clip contains new facts about the issue so that there is an immediate

learning opportunity. We also hope that the HealthInfoBytes will serve as an attractor to our larger web resource. The first three Bytes cover the release of our Overview, the Preventing Aboriginal Maternal Smoking Portal and an introduction to our resources on 'ice' with links to the Alcohol and Other Drugs Knowledge Centre. HealthInfoBytes will be very short (a minute or two) to maximise the likelihood that people will watch them immediately. They will also be available on our YouTube Channel. Our HealthInfoByte program will enable us to respond quickly to emerging health priorities



and to get the relevant resources directly to where they are needed. Please let me know what you think.

Director's Communique

One milestone after another

Since the last Communique I am pleased to report that:

- In September the HealthInfoNet turn 18. We are extremely proud of our achievements during that time. Thank you to all our friends, colleagues and supporters. As they say... and most sincerely felt... none of it would have been possible without your support. I would also like to acknowledge

the contribution of all the staff who have worked with us over the last 18 years. We have a fantastic team and have worked with many people who have moved on to the next stage of their careers but their contribution is not forgotten. We are delighted when a member of the HealthInfoNet community cycles back into our lives in a new and exciting role.

- We reached 6000 hits over three consecutive days in May. This was a response to our coverage of the federal budget as we provided links to information relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health.
- Also in May we noted we had 4000 Twitter followers which is very encouraging. This figure continues to grow.



Celebrating 18 years this month
with 3 million users, 15 million page views and 5 million sessions



Conferences we attended



Peter France at the AH&MRC Harm Minimisation Summit



Michael Moran at the Victorian AOD Service Providers Conference

HealthInfoNet cafes were held at the following conferences:

In May:

- The Aboriginal Child and Maternal Health Conference in Perth*
- Creating Futures Conference* in Cairns
- The Australasian Drug and Alcohol Strategy Conference in Brisbane*
- the National Rural Health Conference* in Darwin, and
- the Aboriginal Health Conference of WA in Perth.

In June:

- the Australian Health and Medical Research Council (AH&MRC) Harm minimisation summit in Sydney
- The CQI Forum in Perth.

In July:

- Rural Health West Aboriginal health conference in Perth.

In September:

- Victorian AOD Service Providers Forum
- E health forum*
- Snaicc
- CDN
- CATSINaM
- QAAMS*.

*we also presented at these events

National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Drug and Alcohol resource finalist in Internet award

The Australian Indigenous Alcohol and Other Drugs Knowledge Centre was very proud to be a finalist in the Diversity category in the prestigious 2015 Australia and New Zealand Internet awards (ANZIA).

I would like to acknowledge the important contribution of our staff, project partners National Centre for Education and Training on Addiction, National Drug Research Institute and National Drug and Alcohol Research Centre, our reference group members and all of those who have made a positive contribution to this valuable initiative. Readily accessible up to date information and knowledge are required by

those working to reduce harmful substance use among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. This acknowledgement recognizes our contribution to this important area. I'd also like to acknowledge winner of this category - the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine - and we pass on our congratulations to them. The ANZIAS recognise organisations, businesses and individuals who excel in delivering accessible, innovative, information and secure resources to a diverse and wide community on the Internet, both in Australia and New Zealand. The Knowledge Centre provides the evidence base to

reduce harmful substance use among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. It provides fast, free online access to a comprehensive collection of relevant, evidence-based, current and culturally appropriate alcohol and other drug (AOD) materials and information that can be used in the prevention, identification and management of alcohol and other drug use in the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population. The Knowledge Centre is funded by the Australian Department of Health.

www.aodknowledgecentre.net.au



Dr Mick Adams, Joanne Horeau, Jaime Read, Avinna Trzesinski, Kathy Ride, Professor Neil Drew

Aboriginal cadet joins the HealthInfoNet team

I am delighted to announce that we appointed our first Aboriginal cadet at the HealthInfoNet. Mikayla Hollows is currently studying Nursing at Edith Cowan University and is in her first year of studies. She will be working on the cancer section, in particular the National Indigenous Cancer Network

(NiCaN) section, as a Research Assistant and will be mentored by one of our Senior Research staff. Mikayla's appointment was made possible with funding from Menzies School of Health Research who are the lead partners for NiCaN. NiCaN is a national network that encourages and

supports collaboration around Indigenous cancer research and delivery of services to Indigenous people with cancer including their carers and families. We welcome Mikayla on board and look forward to more opportunities of this kind developing within the HealthInfoNet.

New portal tackles Aboriginal maternal smoking in WA



Trish O'Hara and Jaime Read from HealthInfoNet, Roanna Lobo Curtin Uni, Neil Drew Director, Denese Griffin and Alexa Wilkins - the former AMSSU

The HealthInfoNet in partnership with the Collaboration for Evidence, Research and Impact in Public Health (CERIPH) at Curtin University, launched a new portal to address Aboriginal maternal smoking issues in WA.

The free to access portal will provide coordinated access to information, resources, tools and training on preventing maternal smoking for those working with pregnant Aboriginal women, new mothers and their families. A free online yarning place is also available to encourage ongoing discussion and knowledge sharing between health practitioners who work in this area.

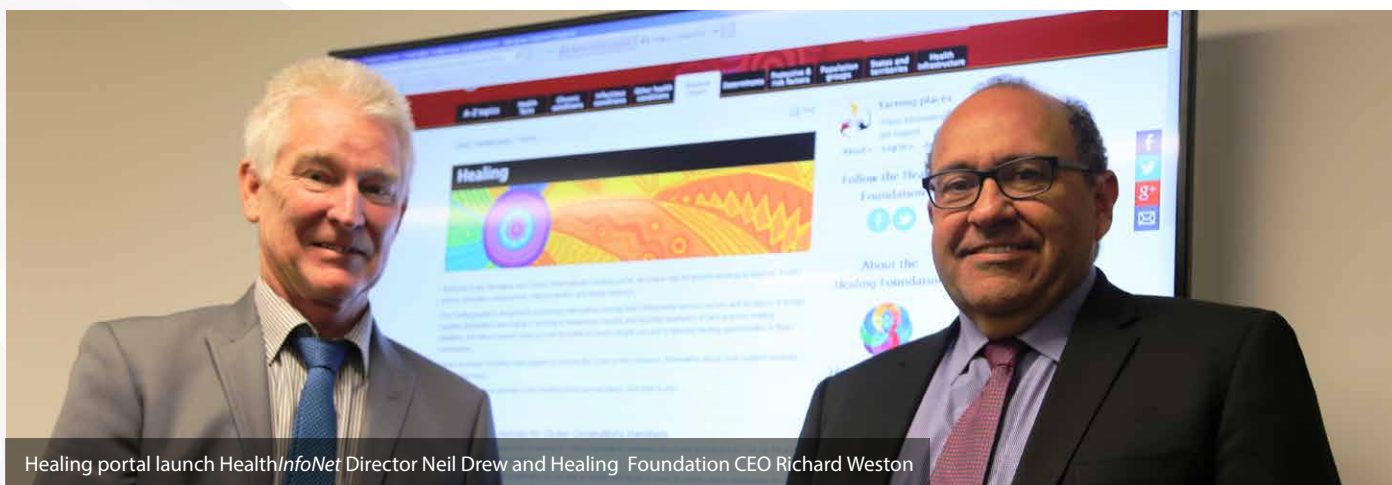


New Healing portal launched

Edith Cowan University's Australian Indigenous Health *InfoNet*, in partnership with The Healing Foundation, launched a healing portal on the Health *InfoNet* website (www.healthinfonet.ecu.edu.au/related-issues/healing). The healing portal will engage users from a broad range of areas including health, justice, child protection and family violence. At the heart of the portal and Yarning place is the connection with culture, knowledge systems and information sharing. It provides culturally appropriate information and the latest research on topics such as trauma, Stolen Generations, children and young people, men's and women's healing, and education, training and employment. This is the first

portal bringing together information about what is working in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander healing in one accessible online resource. So much positive work is taking place around the country to heal our Stolen Generations, their descendants and everyone affected by colonisation and past government policies but because this work spans many sectors and locations, it hasn't been easy for people to share their knowledge, until now. The Healing Portal allows individuals, organisations, governments and communities to learn from best practice healing initiatives, share tools and resources and work together to develop healing opportunities in our communities. The launch was held in Perth

at Yorgum Aboriginal Corporation. On 14th September. The Healing Foundation CEO, Richard Weston, said 'Sharing and elevating Indigenous knowledge is critical to developing better policy. The portal will help legislators, researchers and universities broaden their understanding of healing and what's working around Australia, and make it easier for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander agencies to access current healing research and implement this in their work. Health *InfoNet* Director, Professor Neil Drew, said of the new portal and Yarning place 'It brings together a wealth of information including cultural ways of healing, trauma, Stolen Generations and healing for children, young people, men and women.'



Healing portal launch Health *InfoNet* Director Neil Drew and Healing Foundation CEO Richard Weston

Annual advisory board and Roundtable meetings

Melbourne was the venue this year for our annual face to face advisory board meeting. I was delighted to again welcome our members from across the country who freely give up their time to provide us with strategic advice and are invaluable to the Health *InfoNet* in guiding our work. I thank them again for their time and sharing their knowledge. Following this meeting we invited representatives from Victoria to join us for a Roundtable discussion about key issues facing their organisations and how we can support this. We were joined by the Jean Hailes Foundation, Australian Policy Online, Lowitja Research Institute, Monash University from Victoria as well as several of our advisory board members (Janine Mohamed, Michael Adams, Sandra Thompson, Ian Ring and Michael Tynan).



Participants attending the Roundtable meeting in Melbourne