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Director's Communiqué

Director's welcome

To come...(end of year wrap/zoom meetings on east coast with peak organisations/season's greetings/mention east coast lockdowns since July/impact for them and us)




Professor Neil Drew

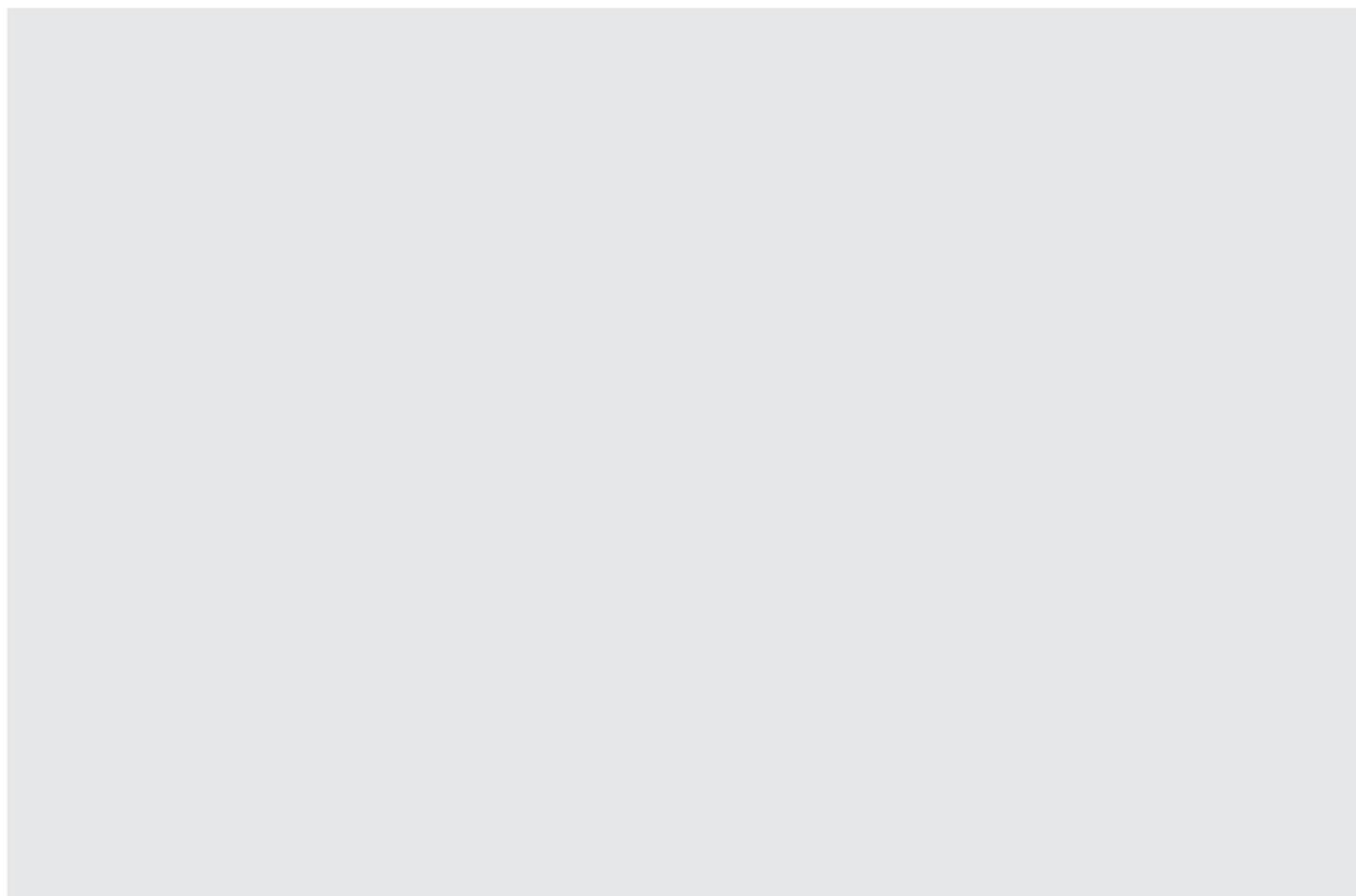
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The Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet acknowledges the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters of Australia and the Torres Strait. We respect all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people—their customs and their beliefs. We also pay our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

ECU acknowledges our work



Caption...

I was the recipient of a special award in recognition of generating the highest external research income of all those within a research area' and as a 'High Achieving Researcher'. I would like to acknowledge the Australian Department of Health who has funded the

HealthInfoNet since its inception as part of its ongoing commitment to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Also to thank all of our staff whose combined efforts produce the "high quality research output". The scheme

rewards and recognises researchers who have produced high-quality research outputs or attracted substantial and consistent external research funding over 2018-2020. The research category we are in is for those who don't quite fit the standard definition of research.

Uncle Mick Adams on expert panel



Uncle Mick Adams was one of the panel experts in The Lowitja Institute's KT & coffee Webinar series on 12 August. With half the country in lockdown, it was a wonderful opportunity to hear from this panel. We continue our strong partnership with The Lowitja Institute (as a partner organisation, membership of our Advisory Board, and we are part of their Members Community).

AOD Reference group meeting



We were delighted to welcome in person some of the WA based AOD Knowledge Centre reference group members to our meeting in September, with the other members joining us online. The user stats continue to grow each year and confirm how important this evidenced based AOD information is to the sector.

Caption....

Our Journal has a new name



For over 40 years, the Journal has always been part of the HealthBulletin, but as of last year is now published via ECU's online repository via BePress. Nothing has changed other than how articles are submitted and viewed. It has, however, given us access to an international audience that we didn't have previously and encouragingly, the stats are growing. The newly designed journal (with a new logo and website) has accumulated over 2000 readers worldwide and is becoming increasingly visible and accessible to researchers and other readers.

The new name - [Journal of the Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet](#) - reflects the history that the journal is a product of the HealthInfoNet.

To celebrate the launch of the journal's new name, the journal is encouraging submissions to accompany two Special Editions in 2022. Each year Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet commissions Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health topic reviews, which are subject to blind peer review and published as Special Editions in the journal (follow [this](#)



[link](#) to see the latest published health topic review).

In 2022, the following reviews will be published:

- *a Review of cannabis use among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people*
- *a Review of diabetes among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.*

Submissions may cover any evidence-based aspect of either cannabis use or diabetes among Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and can be full or brief research reports. All manuscripts will be subject to blind peer review. See our [Contributor's page](#) for further information and [submission preparation guidelines](#). The closing date for submission is **Thursday, 23 December 2021**.

Aboriginal Natural helpers help naturally



The consultation team with participants at the Mandurah workshop held at the Winjan Aboriginal Corporation facility in August.

I'm delighted to share that an ECU research project funded by the Western Australian government has been consulting with natural helpers in Aboriginal communities in the south west and Perth urban areas of Western Australia.

Led by Dr Uncle Mick Adams, Senior Aboriginal Research Fellow at the Australian Indigenous HealthInfoNet, and supported by community Cultural Consultant Brett Hill, the project has been asking natural helpers about their experiences of Covid 19. I am the Chief Investigator on the project.

The workshops, held so far in Narrogin, Bunbury, Mandurah and Armadale attended by over 60 people, have been very revealing. Despite the overwhelming weight of information available, many participants feel that they still lacked information that they could trust.

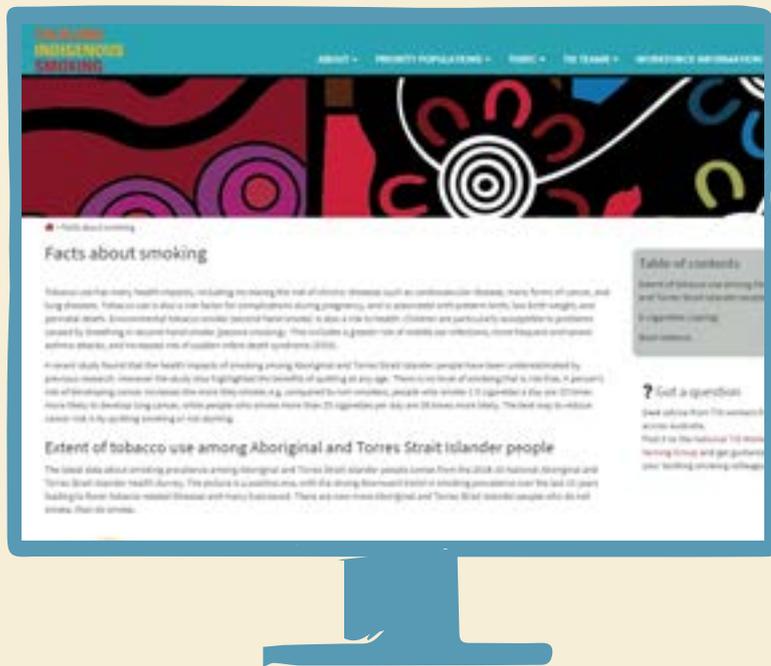
Natural helpers are those in the community who are naturally turned to in times of crisis for information and support. A particular focus was to explore where people are getting their information from and how trustworthy they feel those sources are. Using a visual methods approach developed for the project in collaboration with ECU's Associate Professor Stuart Medley, participants visually 'mapped' their sources of information from those that were nearest to them and trusted, to those that were further away and considered less reliable.

Another very strong theme is that people want resources that are visual and simple to understand. The team, along with the project Cultural Consultant Brett Hill, will be returning to each community in the coming months to get community endorsement of the findings, which will be compiled in a

report to the Western Australian government. The preliminary results shed some light on why vaccine rates in Aboriginal communities are low.

There was great interest in the preliminary findings. The story was pitched by ECU PR exclusively to ABC, which resulted in widespread coverage: including ABC Radio National (AM), [ABC Online](#), ABC TV and several ABC radio stations. There were 179 media mentions, reaching a total audience of 27,880,423 people, worth an estimated advertising value of \$257,894. Here is one of the articles [Noongar woman Charmaine Councillor wants local faces promoting vaccinations - ABC News](#).

Tackling Indigenous Smoking events



Ashleigh Parnell attended both the TIS Workforce Development day and WA Jurisdictional Workshop in Perth in September. The TIS  supports and connects the TIS staff around the country.

NATIONAL BEST PRACTICE UNIT
TACKLING INDIGENOUS SMOKING

Healing Right Way

I am an Associate Investigator on this significant project. [ECU's Healing Right Way project](#) has contributed to the Stroke Foundation's new booklet helping Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians cope with life after a stroke. Statistics show Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians are more than twice as likely than non-Aboriginal Australians to suffer a stroke and are likely to have the stroke at a much younger age. The new booklet, called [Our Stroke Journey](#), was launched during National Stroke Week, covers everything people need to know about life after a stroke. Our [Stroke Journey](#) was made specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians and was created in collaboration with Aboriginal organisations and community members. It includes stories from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander survivors of stroke, their families, and Aboriginal health professionals.



ECU Elder joins us for morning tea



Dr Nan Roma Winmar is the **Elder in residence** at the **Mount Lawley campus**, where our offices are located. It was a wonderful opportunity, as part of an ongoing

conversation, to hear some of her stories and for her to meet our staff. Dr Winmar is a respected Noongar **elder**, a passionate advocate for education, language, arts, and is

an accomplished artist. She is also involved in several research projects involving Noongar language and song promoting Noongar language and cultural activities.

Presentation about our cancer section to AHCWA staff



In September we had the opportunity through Cancer Council WA to update AHCWA staff about our comprehensive cancer section.

Engaging at conferences

Despite border closures, we managed to take part in several conferences to promote our work, mainly as presenters, as we had six abstracts accepted.

- National Allied Health conference August – presented online
- AAFTC Conference September – presented online
- Oceania Palliative Care conference September – provided inserts as physical packs were sent to 1000 delegates
- NDRI Symposium October – attended in Perth and had a display table
- WANADA Symposium October – exhibited in Perth
- Rural Health West – exhibited in Perth
- APSAD – presented online
- Rural Medicine Conference October – presented online
- SNAICC Conference – presented online
- ANZMH Indigenous SEWB Conference – presented online
- IAHA Conference – virtual stand



WANADA Conference. Courtney King (on the left), Ashleigh Parnell (centre) and Rachael Ferris (icare outreach at Community Drug and Alcohol Service) (right).



Courtney King showing 3rd year medical students at Notre Dame how to access our resources.

Presentation to ECU's nursing students



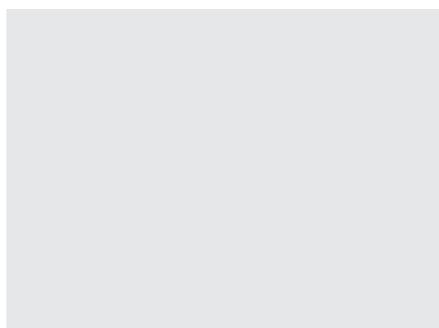
Two of our research team gave a comprehensive update to students from the School of Nursing and Midwifery in August. It was an invaluable opportunity to support students in their study and future work

HealthInfoNet 24th Birthday celebration

Another year has flown, and we celebrated quietly with a staff morning tea at our offices. It's important for us to mark this important milestone as each year means our work continues to be freely accessible to the workforce who need evidence based, relevant, up to date resources to support them in their work.



Staff news

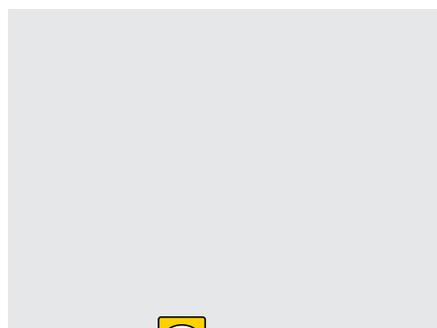


Marianne Durbin

We welcomed Marianne Durbin to our research team in August. Research staff member Avinna Trezinski, who took leave to work in Broome for a year, will be working remotely for us on an upcoming cannabis review and returns to the office next year. A former research staff member Kathy Ride has been contracted to work on a review of diabetes for us.

In September, we farewell ECU Nursing cadet Natalie Stoksic who was with us for a year in our research area and is shortly to complete her final placement in Derby, WA before graduating as a Nurse. In October, we also farewell research team member Tam Swann who will be part of a team working on a randomised trial at the Institute for Respiratory Health in WA in the coming year. Our Social Media Content Creator Joey Chua has also left to take up an interstate opportunity, and we wish them all the very best. We welcomed Stephanie Huynh, who joined us in October to take up the role.

Our staff continue to attend cultural events as part of their ongoing PD training. Pauline



Stephanie Huynh

Shanley enjoyed a cultural tour with Kuku Yulanji Cultural Habitat Tours at Cooya Beach while on holiday in far north Queensland. She then worked from home for two weeks after the holiday as part of the WA quarantine requirements.



Pauline Shanley with the catch of the day!

Congratulations to ACT Senior Australian of the Year nominee

I'm delighted to hear of the nomination of Julie Tongs OAM, CEO of Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health and Community Services, acknowledging her long term contribution as an advocate working to improve health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Knowledge exchange via social media

Since implementing this strategy a few years ago, our engagement rates continue to grow across all of our social media channels – LinkedIn, Twitter, Facebook and added this year Instagram.

Keep up to date and follow us, like us and retweet us on our socials. Every touch point with us is a learning opportunity.



LinkedIn



Twitter



Facebook



Instagram