

update

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Working with Aboriginal &/or Torres
Strait Islander peoples & communities

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Working with Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander peoples & communities

By Susan Helyar, Director,
ACT Council of Social Service Inc. (ACTCOSS)

The articles collated in this journal provide guidance on good practice in working with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples and communities. The questions below arose as we read the contributors' kindly shared articles. We hope this journal prompts personal and organisational reflections, learning and action.

Would an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person want to work for your organisation? What has stopped you from employing Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people? What could you do to overcome these barriers?

What are you doing to familiarise your organisation and staff with the tools and resources that support culturally safe and competent work? How have you tapped into expertise available locally and online?

Does your organisation have identified Aboriginal and/or Torres

Strait Islander positions? How many people who identify as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander work with you?

What can you do to affirm and support self-determination by Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples in our service system?

What does your organisation do to connect with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander leaders and community groups? What have you learned and how have you changed what you do?

Have you attended events hosted by local Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations during Reconciliation Week, NAIDOC Week, or at another time of year?

Have you read the *Protocols for working with Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander peoples*? Can you comply with these protocols? What can you do to increase your ability to comply with these protocols?

ConnXtions: A successful partnership for education & employment

By Caroline Hughes, Director, CIT Yurauna Centre, & Simon Rosenberg, CEO, Northside Community Service

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Job Readiness Program—aka ‘ConnXtions’—is a strong partnership between CIT Yurauna Centre and Northside Community Service. It enables young Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander adults, many of whom are parents with young children, to complete a Certificate 3 course in Community Services over a semester. Family support is also provided through a respectful, strengths-based approach to help overcome barriers that might have prevented their participation in education.

The ConnXtions partnership has been instrumental to the success of the program. The Yurauna Centre provides a high quality teaching and learning environment with strong community support. Students have benefited from being recognised as part of the broader student body at CIT. Learning flexibility and a tailored approach to delivering each of the classroom sessions has contributed to the high graduation rate for the group.

In particular, the teaching style and the holistic approach to learning encouraged in the classroom has ensured that all students are encouraged to recognise their strengths in the classroom, and are supported to contribute to class discussion and assessments based on these strengths.

Northside provides a range of supports according to student needs and preferences. This includes transport to and from CIT Reid, catering, assistance with social security or housing matters, and follow-up with students after the course to assist with career progression or further educational opportunities. An on-site space for early childhood education and care for the students’ younger children, while their parents are doing coursework, has been a great way to encourage whole-of-family learning.

In addition to a nationally recognised qualification, participation in ConnXtions has given students an understanding of the requirements of working within the community sector and the challenges in making social change.

The program also focuses on the development of each student’s professional networks, which in turn will assist with further opportunities.

The success of ConnXtions can also be attributed to the cultural influence of the course delivery, which encourages students to ‘learn from their own people in their own way’. This approach sees a consistency in students’ attendance and contribution to class discussion about current social challenges. A priority of the program team was to make the classroom a culturally safe environment for students, to realise their full learning potential.

The Certificate 3 level qualification achieved by the students at the end of this program has opened up a wide range of options for them, including vocational and higher education opportunities, work placements and employment. Many students commented that they had not realised what was possible until they engaged in the program.

Case study

One of the participants, Anna (not her real name), was a slightly older student than some of her classmates. Anna came into the classroom obviously nervous and anxious. Before commencing the program Anna had commented to program staff that she was unsure if she would be able to complete the studies as this was the first time in a classroom since her childhood.

School in the past had not been a pleasant or inspiring experience for Anna. Discrimination, bullying and a constant scrutiny of her work had detracted from her learning and in fact had damaged her confidence and self-worth.

During the first few weeks of the ConnXtions program, Anna sat quietly not wanting to be noticed and was even too nervous to open her books. As the course went on Anna was provided with some discreet and respectful one on one support from both the CIT Yurauna teaching team and the Northside Program Coordinator.

Anna's confidence began to grow. She went from being unsure about everything to identifying a career goal she was working toward. Anna reported to her teacher that she took learnings from the class and applied them to her own family life and community. By the end of the course she was completing all work without any assistance.

Her 4 year old son participated happily in the early education and care provided just a few metres away from the ConnXtions classroom. He and Anna had lunch together with the other children and parents, and Anna could see how his confidence was growing too. She told the educators that she could see that her son was going to do well in school.

Anna ended the year receiving an award for her outstanding commitment to learning and is now completing a work placement with a community

organisation and working toward her goal of full time employment in the sector.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge the invaluable contributions of Lynnice Keen as Yurauna Centre course teacher, and Klair Carney as Northside Program Coordinator, to driving the success of ConnXtions.

Northside Community Service:

www.northside.asn.au

CIT Yurauna Centre:

www.cit.edu.au/aboriginal_torres_strait_islander/yurauna

Strengthening & growing the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander alcohol & other drug workforce

By Alcohol Tobacco and Other Drug Association ACT (ATODA)

In the ACT, alcohol and other drug (AOD) treatment and support are specialist health services delivered through Aboriginal community-controlled and mainstream non-government and government services to provide a range of evidence-based treatment options for individuals and their families.

The 2015 sector-driven client census survey found that 25% of people accessing specialist AOD services in the ACT self-identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.¹ This survey indicates that on any single day between 100 and 125 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are accessing specialist AOD

treatment and support services in the ACT.

Specialist AOD services are in high demand. For example, the ACT AOD National Minimum Data Set shows a 36% increase in specialist AOD episodes of care between 2010 and 2014.²

High quality AOD treatment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is acknowledged to have two components:

1. It must be delivered according to established and accepted best practice in the AOD field, and
2. In ways that are culturally safe for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

Competency in both of these components is necessary to adequately deliver the treatment that people are entitled to and deserve. Further, individual services and the AOD treatment system should be adequately planned and resourced according to evidence based tools including the *Drug and Alcohol Clinical Care and Prevention (DA-CCP) adaptation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people*.³

A key strategy in building both expertise and cultural safety within any specialist AOD setting is by employing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers who are AOD trained and supporting them to work effectively with Aboriginal and Torres Strait

Islander clients and their families and community.

The sector-driven 2014 workforce profile found that 5% of the specialist AOD workforce in the ACT identified as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander. Most of these workers are located in Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, and only two positions within mainstream services were identified as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific.⁴

Given the high proportion of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people accessing specialist AOD services in the ACT, more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers are needed to meet the needs of this client group across the entire service sector—both Aboriginal community-controlled and mainstream. While the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people prefer to access community-controlled services, many, for a variety of reasons, also preferentially access mainstream services for all or some of their AOD treatment. It is, therefore, crucial to ensure that *all* specialist AOD settings provide culturally safe treatment.

Building such cultural safety would be expected to improve retention to services, prolong service-client contact, and thus improve AOD treatment and other health and social outcomes.⁵

Building the capacity in all specialist AOD settings in the

ACT to work with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and increasing the specialist AOD Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce are, therefore, priorities for action.

This priority is ever more important with the current establishment of the Ngunnawal Bush Healing Farm, an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specific adult specialist AOD residential rehabilitation service.

ATODA has long advocated for ACT Health to take a strategic and long-term approach to resourcing, strengthening and growing the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander specialist AOD workforce across the sector.

A workforce strategy needs to include, for example, components that provide:

- Adequate resourcing commensurate with the actual cost of delivering the specialist AOD treatment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander individuals and families (including for staffing and program delivery costs)
- Pathways from current AOD courses (e.g. Certificate IV in AOD) into student placements and ultimately employment with specialist AOD services
- Adequate and resourced AOD specific clinical and non-clinical professional external supervision and support
- Adequate workplace supports for Aboriginal and

Torres Strait Islander AOD workers to ensure they are not isolated, overworked, and overloaded with unreasonable expectations (e.g. through employing more than one Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander worker in each organisation, providing external cultural supervision, establishing an ACT AOD specific peer/workers network)

- AOD specific (e.g. use of tools validated with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people) and general workplace strategies to improve cultural safety across their organisations (e.g. cultural safety training for staff and management; developing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander-specific positions within the organisation's existing workforce).

Such an approach could strategically build capacity within specialist AOD settings in the ACT to improve health and social outcomes for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community.

ATODA: www.atoda.org.au

See page 15 for footnotes.



Wrap around health care for local Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples

By Dr Jason Agostino, GP Adviser Indigenous Australians Health Program, & Isabel Reeves, CCSS Care Coordinator, Capital Health Network

It is unacceptable that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have some of the poorest health outcomes of any group of people in the world. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples die (around or approximately) 10 years younger than other Australians. For example, compared to the non-Indigenous population, national death rates are 5.9 times higher for diabetes, 3 times higher for chronic lower respiratory diseases like emphysema and 1.7 times higher for coronary artery disease.¹

Here in the ACT, 76% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a long-term health condition which is significantly higher than the national average for all Australians (around 50%).²

Disability rates for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the ACT (46%) are also significantly higher than the national non-Indigenous average.³

At Capital Health Network (CHN), we support local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples who have a chronic disease to access health services through our Care Coordination and Supplementary Services (CCSS) program. We work with their GP to improve health outcomes through better access to coordinated and multidisciplinary care.

We help patients understand their chronic health condition and learn self-management skills to managing their health better. We encourage patients to participate in regular reviews with their GP and support patients to adhere to their treatment plan. To do this, we support the patient to access other health services identified in a care plan and also connect patients with community-based services as needed. We also support patients and families to adopt healthy lifestyle choices.

We recently received feedback from a client who wants to use her story to encourage health professionals to refer their patients to this program.

Charlotte Matteson has received assistance from CHN's CCSS Program with transport, welfare and arrangement of medical and specialist appointments.



Charlotte wants to use her story to encourage health professionals to refer their patients to Capital Health Network's Care Coordination and Supplementary Services program.

"Without this assistance, I wouldn't have been able to receive the medical help I needed as I can't afford medication and transport," said Charlotte Matteson, CCSS client.

The CCSS team also provides valuable encouragement and emotional support to Charlotte to continue with her medical care. For example, the team have helped with the practical translation of interpreting medical language.

Charlotte has also received free and confidential support through CHN's NewAccess Program. "My Access Coach has been someone to talk to and who has helped me with anger management. I would recommend NewAccess to anyone," said Charlotte.

CHN acknowledges the comprehensive primary health care services that are provided by Winnunga Nimmitjiah to the majority of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the ACT and also provides funding to support care coordination and supplementary services through Winnunga.

It is important that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT can access culturally

appropriate and available services, at any general practice they use.

CHN is supporting general practice to improve their cultural awareness of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and their health issues to increase the utilisation of health checks and chronic disease management. Patients are referred by their GP from a general practice participating in the Practice Incentives Program (PIP) Indigenous Health Incentive (IHI) into the CCSS program.

We're also supporting practices to help Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in a culturally sensitive way self-identify so they can access available assistance. CHN holds Cultural Awareness Training approximately every two to three months in order to better help practices to support the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander staff and patient population. This can be accessed by any general practice in the ACT and has seen great uptake since its beginning. This aids to help that practice remain registered as a PIP IHI practice in order to better assist their Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients to receive the benefits of both Closing the Gap and/or Care Coordination.

Primary health care workers are often challenged to respond to disadvantaged populations. Often they cannot change the social determinants of health (such as housing, education and social support) that affect their patients' lives, but they can acknowledge the disadvantage experienced, and sometimes they can help patients to develop skills (particularly self-care) to improve their health or help them connect with social care agencies to assist with their non-health problems.⁴

Capital Health Network is committed to continue to integrate care at a local level and support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to improve their health.

Capital Health Network: www.chnact.org.au

See page 15 for footnotes.



The journey of accessing justice for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander women

By Ms Tracey Lea Harris, Program Manager, Women's Legal Centre

The Women's Legal Centre's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Women's Legal Access Program has been operating for nearly nine years. Our Program's Aboriginal case workers provide support to access legal assistance and case management services. We assist women who need support and legal services to realise their legal rights—rights in relation to their jobs, their children, their health, safety and wellbeing. We have created very strong relationships working with and for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women here

in the ACT and region. We have supported hundreds of women and, indirectly, their families and communities since the program's commencement.

The program is underpinned by a broad definition of access to justice. The support provided is informed by the understanding that the justice issues faced by Aboriginal women are not just legal issues but equal and respectful access to basic services including housing and social security, the right to be free from interpersonal and institutionalised violence, the right to be free from

discrimination, and the right to family and culture. The program has always operated from the principle we are an Aboriginal community-led practice. The centre as a whole is directly informed by Aboriginal needs when providing its access to justice services.

We prioritise our service delivery to Aboriginal women by providing culturally safe employment practices within the centre. We employ two Aboriginal women case-managers in the centre, in the program and in the new Domestic Violence Unit.

We have identified that providing access to justice for Aboriginal women requires our workers to be flexible and responsive. This means outreach is given a priority and requests for assistance can be responded to immediately. Our case managers take Aboriginal women's past and present experiences with institutions into consideration to ensure sensitive and culturally centred support. We also use existing relationships and networks to facilitate engagement with Aboriginal women and their families. For example, Teletha Elemes delivers community education on legal issues and related supports an Aboriginal Women's Group at Munjuwa Health Corporation in Queanbeyan each Thursday.

We have invited Aboriginal women to inform the way the centre delivers assistance and how best to include Aboriginal women's voices. We support their

contribution at key stakeholder events and discussions with government. Upon appointment of a new Executive Director in 2015, Ms Elena Rosenman, we arranged the first of an annual meeting between her and the 'ACT Grannies Group', a group made of senior Aboriginal women in our region to provide a formal opportunity for direct engagement. This type of senior centre engagement ensures that, from the top down, the centre is informed by the distinct needs of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women and their families within the local area.

Our program also maintains relationships with many community sector and legal services running Aboriginal programs within their mainstream services. These services often do not have Aboriginal people employed in these agencies, so maintaining these relationships

helps develop their ability to provide respectful and improved access for our people, the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families whom reside here on Ngunnawal Country.

We have learned, operating a service for Aboriginal women over nearly a decade, that forging and nurturing these sorts of relationships not only helps our women access a fuller range of responsive services, it helps us to become a better service provider to them, and this means better access to justice.

Women's Legal Centre:
www.womenslegalact.org



ACT response to Steven Freeman's death is too little, too late

By Julie Tongs OAM, CEO, Winnunga Nimmityjah Aboriginal Health Service. Article published in *The Canberra Times*, 19 June 2016

It was 13 months ago that Steven Freeman, a young Aboriginal man on remand in the Alexander Maconochie Centre, was bashed so severely that he almost died. Three weeks ago, he died in that prison.

In all that time there was a virtual blackout on information from both the ACT Government and the AMC about the vicious assault.

None of the circumstances of the bashing, nor any of the steps the AMC may have taken to prevent a recurrence or keep Steven safe, has been revealed.

The ACT Government and Corrections Minister Shane Rattenbury steadfastly refused repeated requests from me and others for a full independent

inquiry into the bashing, care and safety of Mr Freeman.

There has been a police investigation into the matter, which was initially used by ACT authorities to justify the refusal to provide any information about the assault. Mr Rattenbury advised at the time that he regarded the investigation as equivalent to an independent inquiry. The police investigation was apparently fruitless but still no details of it have been made public.

The ACT Government and prison authorities also justified the refusal to provide information on the grounds that the Aboriginal Legal Service had

announced that it would pursue a civil action case against the ACT Government on Mr Freeman's behalf and that, therefore, it could not comment.

Just before Mr Freeman died in custody there was, coincidentally, much reflection on the 25th anniversary of the Royal Commission into Aboriginal Deaths in Custody.

Speaking five years earlier—on the 20th anniversary of the report—one of the commissioners, Hal Wootten, QC, made some particularly poignant comments. In summarising the royal commission reviews of cases involving Aboriginal prisoners he said: 'Again and again one found that the system of ... investigations operated not to make custodial officers accountable but to protect them from scrutiny. Inadequate police investigations were commonly rubber-stamped by ritualistic coronial inquiries in which the adequacy and competency of the police inquiry went unquestioned and custodial practices went unscrutinised.'

In his speech Mr Wootten drew from a report submitted by him to the royal commission in which he found 'there is a very great temptation on the part of custodial officers to be secretive.

'Instead of regarding relatives and their legal representative, such as the Aboriginal Legal Service, as genuinely concerned people who want to know what happened, there is a tendency to treat them as troublemakers to be denied knowledge in case they misuse it, or (patronisingly) as people who should not be told things that might upset them.'

Mr Wootten concluded that 'a particularly undesirable practice is the use of the coroner or a pending inquiry as a shield behind which investigative officers hide'.

The royal commissioner drew the obvious conclusion that serious consequences can flow from a failure on the part of custodial authorities to be open, and that without sympathetic, full and open communication of all relevant facts—and an obviously genuine and thorough investigation of the matters by police—suspicion will grow. And due to the long-embedded history of Aboriginal and police relationships, suspicion will grow exponentially.

These views were formed 25 years ago, but the response and attitude of ACT authorities to the Steven Freeman bashing suggest that not much has changed.

The response of the NSW government and NSW prison authorities to a recent assault on a prisoner in Grafton provides an interesting contrast. The Grafton bashing involved a person of Muslim faith, alleged to be an IS sympathiser, assaulting a person of European heritage with a history of involvement with the Australian Army. A savage beating left the victim with serious lacerations to the face. The assault that Mr Freeman suffered was reportedly inflicted by a gang of up to four assailants.

The NSW Government responded to the Grafton assault by immediately standing down the prison superintendent and ordering a full external inquiry. Prison authorities provided extensive details on the circumstances and the matter was widely reported in the media.

Members of the Canberra community concerned about Mr Freeman's bashing and the consequent embargo of information might well ask what differing feature of the two assaults could have led to such divergent responses.

It is almost certain that the conclusion would be, fairly or unfairly, that one of the two victims was Aboriginal.

The Aboriginal community is determined that Mr Freeman not become just another black-death-in-custody statistic. The ACT Government has responded to his death by initiating the independent inquiry that the Aboriginal community has been seeking for the last year, while Mr Freeman was still alive. It is now too late for him, and it can only be hoped that the inquiry will lead to the sorts of changes needed to ensure that we learn from his death—which was feared by many—so that such a tragedy will never be repeated.

Steven Freeman's death is a horribly high price to have had to pay for that knowledge.

ACT 2020 Citizen Voice Community Vision



ACTCOSS Conference 2016 • 4-5 Aug

Rydges Capital Hill,
Cnr Canberra Ave & National Circuit, Forrest, ACT

This year, the ACT Council of Social Service Inc. convenes our biennial conference. We are bringing together people working in the community sector as staff, volunteers or board members, activists, researchers and policy makers to:

- hear the diverse voices of people who live in Canberra
- build a collective understanding of a community vision for the future of our city
- explore how we can work together to achieve this vision.

Draft schedule coming soon!

Find out more at our conference webpage:

www.actcoss.org.au/news-events/conference



Indigenous Community Volunteers

Indigenous Community Volunteers (ICV) exists to provide opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to develop human and community capacity in order to improve their quality of life, health, social and economic wellbeing and participation in Australian society.

ICV is reconciliation in action. It connects Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians by providing a platform to share cultural knowledge and skills. ICV's community development activities promote two way cultural understanding and respect. Reconciliation is at the heart of all of ICV's work.

ICV has been working in the Canberra region for a number of years now, and has long standing relationships with many of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisations. Building respectful relationships is the core of what we do and none of our community development work would be possible without maintaining these strong relationships.

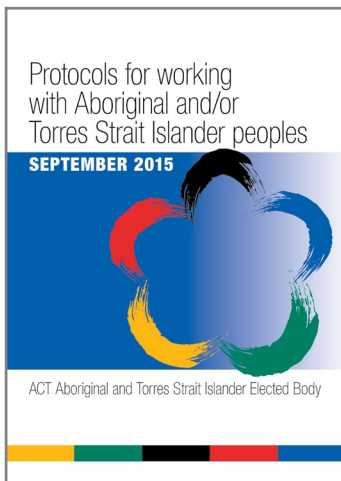
ICV's approach to community development work is based on community invitation, promoting a strengths based approach that is community driven and at community pace to ensure effective community development practice. There are many ways in which community organisations can support Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and this starts with listening and working in partnership to achieve desired outcomes and vision collaboratively. ICV promotes reconciliation through two way cultural understanding including



active involvement in significant dates such as Reconciliation Week, Sorry Day and NAIDOC.

To celebrate Reconciliation Week this year, ICV Canberra held a morning tea with local ICV volunteers and community partners to come together in the spirit of reconciliation. This was a great opportunity for current and potential volunteers to get together to talk about the community development work that is happening in this region and share their experiences.

Indigenous
Community Volunteers:
www.icv.com.au



Protocols for working with Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander peoples

The ACT Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Elected Body (ATSIEB) have developed these protocols in close consultation with ACT Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander communities & organisations.

These protocols have been designed to guide public, private, & not-for-profit agencies & organisations to effectively engage, communicate, & work with the ACT Aboriginal &/or Torres Strait Islander communities.

Download the protocols: www.atsieb.com.au/870

Celebrating NAIDOC Week 3-10 July 2016

Annual NAIDOC Week celebrations are held across Australia in July, to celebrate the history, culture and achievements of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

The theme for 2016 is **'Songlines - The living narrative of our nation'**. For Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, the Dreamtime describes a time when the earth, people and animals were created by our ancestral spiritual beings. They created the rivers, lakes, plants, land formations and living creatures. Dreaming tracks are sometimes called 'Songlines' which record the travels of these ancestral spirits who 'sung' the land into life. The National NAIDOC Committee encourages all Australians to explore and celebrate how, through Songlines, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people remain connected to Country and have been able to maintain and share sacred stories and ceremonies for tens of thousands of years.

NAIDOC Week is a great opportunity for all peoples to participate in a range of activities and to support your local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander community. If you are an employer of Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander staff, we encourage you to offer them the flexibility to volunteer or attend events. Their participation can assist them with to connect with their community as well as meet their cultural and family obligations.

Here are some ideas on how your workplace can celebrate NAIDOC Week:

- Encourage and support all staff to participate in NAIDOC Week activities in your region
- Plan to host or partner an event such as a morning tea or barbecue based on the national theme
- View or show a movie or documentary in your meeting/staff room/waiting room
- Purchase resources for your library or waiting room, e.g. art, books, flags
- Visit local sites of significance, e.g. Yankee Hat in Namadgi National Park

03-10
JULY
2016



Songlines:
The living narrative
of our nation

- Visit local attractions e.g. National Museum of Australia, Reconciliation Place, National Gallery of Australia
- Nominate an Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander person for an award.

FAQs

Where can I find out more about NAIDOC Week?

Visit the National NAIDOC website at www.naidoc.org.au.

How can I get a copy of the 2016 National NAIDOC poster?

- The poster can be downloaded electronically at www.naidoc.org.au
- Call 1800 079 098 to collect your poster from the Department of Prime Minister & Cabinet Regional Office, Level 2 Morisset House, 7-9 Morisset St, Queanbeyan.

Who is the NAIDOC Committee in Canberra?

The Canberra and District NAIDOC Committees can be contacted via their Facebook page: www.facebook.com/naidocACT

What are some of the activities and events held in the Canberra region?

- The Canberra and District NAIDOC Committee host events and activities. This includes the ACT NAIDOC Awards and Ball, and the ACT NAIDOC Family Day
- The ACT Government and its directorates may host activities and events. This includes the annual flag raising ceremony normally held at the Legislative Assembly on the Monday morning of NAIDOC Week
- Canberra institutions such as the National Museum of Australia, Canberra Theatre, National Art Gallery and the National Film and Sound Archive may host events during NAIDOC Week
- Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander non-government agencies may host activities and events.

Where can I find out about activities and events held in the Canberra region?

Many activities and events are advertised near to the beginning of NAIDOC Week. Most are open events. Some may require you to RSVP. Some are by invitation only.

- The NAIDOC ACT Facebook page aims to provide information on events and activities organised for the ACT and surrounding communities:
www.facebook.com/naidocACT

- The National NAIDOC website includes an online Events Calendar for all States and Territories. You can also add your event to the calendar:
www.naidoc.org.au
- Contact the nearest DPMC Regional Office at Queanbeyan on 02 5712 9000 for information
- Contact the Gulanga Program at ACTCOSS on 02 6202 7200 or gulanga@actcoss.org.au for information.

New online legal toolkit for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples

Adapted from ACT Human Rights Commission media release, 15 March 2016

The ACT Human Rights and Discrimination Commissioner and Women's Legal Centre has launched a new Online Legal Toolkit for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples.

The toolkit has been developed by the ACT Human Rights Commission and the Women's Legal Centre, in conjunction with the Aboriginal Legal Service and Care Inc.

'The toolkit can be immediately accessed on people's smart phones and devices when they find themselves in circumstances of high stress to negotiate issues,' said Dr Helen Watchirs, Human Rights and Discrimination Commissioner.

'It gives useful and practical information on their rights in specific situations, and where to get help.'

'At the Women's Legal Centre we see many Aboriginal women who are facing workplace issues, family breakdown or are engaged

with Child and Youth Protection Services,' said Elena Rosenman, Executive Director of the Women's Legal Centre.

'Many of these women are involved with legal processes without any legal advice, which means they are at risk of making agreements or undertakings that do not respect their rights,' continued Ms Rosenman. 'This site will give all Aboriginal people in Canberra a starting point, some accessible information and point them in the direction of more assistance.'

The toolkit was developed based on feedback from the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community. It includes information on:

- Care and Protection
- Discrimination at work
- Police and security guard contact in public spaces
- Debt and payday lenders



The toolkit can be accessed via internet web browsers on computers and tablets, as well as being added to the home screen of smart phones.

It is available for free at <http://deadlyadvice.hrc.act.gov.au>

ACT Human Rights Commission:
www.hrc.act.gov.au

In memoriam: Jean Moran OAM (1918 – 2016)

Adapted from Life Membership nomination by Cathi Moore, Associate Member

Jean Moran OAM, founding member of ACTCOSS and committed social justice advocate, passed away on 8 May 2016. She was 98.

Jean Moran was a member of the ACT Social Workers Group that initiated the establishment of ACTCOSS in 1962. The ACT Social Workers Group wrote to the National Council of Women in 1962 proposing the establishment of a Council of Social Service in the ACT. Jean played an active role in the establishment of the Council and worked with the Provisional Committee and representatives of agencies who made up the inaugural membership of the Council.

Jean has always had a commitment to social justice and reform. She trained and worked as a hospital almoner (medical social worker) in England before coming to Canberra in 1952 and began voluntary work in the social services sector a couple of years later. Jean had the motivation and the foresight to see that Canberra needed a coordinating body in the social services area.

Jean was also active in ensuring that the Council established a Mental Health Standing Committee. This committee was convened to educate the community and the government about the need for urgent action in this sphere and the ultimate need for an ACT Mental Health Association.

Jean was very active in the establishment of the original directory of community services in Canberra.

Jean prepared, maintained and updated the first six editions of the Directory.

Jean also became an active volunteer in the establishment of the ACTCOSS library. The library formed an important resource for community agencies and their staff for many years. Jean volunteered regularly in the COSS office and coordinated the cataloguing and management of the library.

Jean was an initiator of the Civil Rehabilitation Committee (now Prisoners' Aid ACT) in the early 1960s with representatives of several local agencies working to support families of prisoners incarcerated in NSW jails. She remained a member of the Committee for 39 years and was awarded an OAM for her work in this and other social services areas.

Jean has been a member of ACTCOSS since its inception and she has actively supported the work of the COSS.

ACTCOSS conferred its first Life Membership to Jean Moran at ACTCOSS' 50th birthday in 2013, where she delivered an excellent speech on how she and her fellow ACT Social Workers Group members began ACTCOSS.

We would like to acknowledge Jean Moran for her invaluable contribution to ACTCOSS and to the community.

Vale Brian McConnell

ACTCOSS is very saddened by the passing of Brian McConnell, founding President of Families and Friends for Drug Law Reform (FFDLR).

Brian dedicated much of his life to advocating for systemic drug law reform, and was influential in the adoption of a more humane approach to drug use in the ACT. He fought hard to change public discourse around, and perception of, drug users, particularly the stigma that is often attached.

Through his work with FFDLR, Brian also provided valuable support to families and friends of drug users, including holding an annual Remembrance

Ceremony for people who have lost their lives to drugs.

Brian, alongside his wife Marion, has been an invaluable resource to ACTCOSS, shaping our priorities for advocacy and supporting our advocacy work. He was deeply respected by all in the community and government.

Brian's graciousness, dedication, passion and expertise will be greatly missed.

We offer our condolences to Brian's family and friends, in particular Marion.

Learning & development calendar

Training / Forum	Date / Time	Cost: Member / Non-member / Corp. or Govt.
Reconciliation		
Aboriginal Cultural Awareness Training Facilitated by Koorimunication	16 Sep 2016 9.30am - 4.30pm	\$270 / \$300 / \$330 (incl. GST)
Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Cultural Competency Training: Working And Walking Together Facilitated by Secretariat of National Aboriginal and Islander Childcare (SNAICC)	10-11 Aug 2016 9am - 4.30pm	\$650 / \$700 / \$750 (incl. GST)
Ready4		
Collaboration Community of Practice: Collaborative Leadership Facilitated by ACTCOSS	7, 12, 18, 28 Jul 2016 9.30am - 11am	Free
Emerging Leaders Development Program		
Developing Quality and Continuous Improvement Facilitated by ACTCOSS	20 Jul 2016 9.30am - 12.30pm	\$90 / \$125 / \$150 (incl. GST)
Effective Communication Facilitated by YellowEdge	9 Aug 2016 9.30am - 12.30pm	\$90 / \$125 / \$150 (incl. GST)
Introduction to Grant Writing Facilitated by ACTCOSS	14 Sep 2016 9.30am - 12.30pm	\$90 / \$125 / \$150 (incl. GST)
Productivity, Planning and Time Management Facilitated by ACTCOSS	20 Oct 2016 9.30am - 12.30pm	\$90 / \$125 / \$150 (incl. GST)
Facilitation Skills Facilitated by YellowEdge	8 Nov 2016 9.30am - 4.30pm	\$180 / \$250 / \$300 (incl. GST)
Member Forums		
ACTCOSS Member Policy Forum with the Environment & Planning Directorate Facilitated by ACTCOSS	18 Jul 2016 4pm – 6pm	Free for ACTCOSS members

Find out more about our learning and development opportunities and how to register at the ACTCOSS website: www.actcoss.org.au



Sign up! New weekly community sector eNotices

We have redesigned our weekly email bulletin and moved it to a new system! It's now easier to read and easier to manage your subscription.

Please note: Subscribers to the old eNotices won't be automatically transferred over, so make sure you sign up to the new system to keep receiving eNotices.

Sign up to eNotices: www.actcross.org.au

Connect with us on social media!

Did you know ACTCOSS has a Twitter account and a Facebook page? Follow and like us here:



facebook.com/actcross



twitter.com/actcross

Article footnotes

Strengthening & growing the Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander alcohol & other drug workforce, pp.3-4

1. ATODA, Service Users' Satisfaction and Outcomes Survey. In publication.
2. ATODA (2015), *Funding required for non-government specialist drug treatment and support services to effectively respond to a 36% increase in demand and rising methamphetamine-related harms*, May 2015, accessed 1 April 2016, <www.atoda.org.au>.
3. See <<http://www.atoda.org.au/national-projects/national-drug-and-alcohol-clinical-care-prevention-daccp-project/>>.
4. ATODA (2014), 'ACT Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug Workforce Qualification and Remuneration Profile 2014', *ATODA Monograph Series*, No.2, ATODA, Canberra.

5. National Indigenous Drug and Alcohol Committee (2014), *Alcohol and other drug treatment for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples*, Australian National Council on Drugs, Canberra.

Wrap around health care for local Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples, pp.5-6

1. ABS (2014), *Causes of Death, Australia*.
2. ABS (2013), *Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Survey: First Results*, Australia, 2012-13.
3. Ibid.
4. Primary Health Care Research & Information Service (2016), *Getting Started Guide: Social determinants*.

Next issue:

Update Issue 77, Spring 2016 edition

NDIS transition – Where have we landed?

Members are welcome to contribute articles on the theme.

Copy deadline: 8 August 2016

Space is limited! To guarantee your spot, let us know as soon as possible.

Email: communications@actcoss.org.au

Ph: 02 6202 7200

Issue 77 will be distributed in September 2016.

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Vice President

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Lee-Ann Akauola, Relationships Australia Canberra & Region

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Gen (Genevieve) Lai, Anglicare ACT	Lesley Harris, Associate Member
Dalane Drexler, ACT Mental Health Consumer Network	If you would like to contact the Committee, please contact ACTCOSS. www.actcoss.org.au



The ACT Council of Social Service Inc. (ACTCOSS) is the peak representative body for people living with low incomes or disadvantage, and not-for-profit community organisations in the Australian Capital Territory.

ACTCOSS acknowledges Canberra has been built on the land of the Ngunnawal people. We pay respects to their Elders and recognise the strength and resilience of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. We celebrate Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and ongoing contributions to the ACT community.

ACTCOSS

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Web: www.actcoss.org.au
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ACTCOSS welcomes feedback. Please visit the 'Contact' page on our website for our feedback form, or contact us using the details above.

ACTCOSS staff

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Update is a quarterly journal that provides an opportunity for issues relevant to ACTCOSS' membership to be discussed and for information to be shared. Views expressed are those of individual authors and do not necessarily reflect the policy views of ACTCOSS.



Gulanga Program

Gulanga Program

The Gulanga Program is designed to **support ACT homelessness service providers** and the **children, youth and family sector** to develop and/or improve upon good, **culturally appropriate practice** standards. The program employs Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workers and **aims to provide better engagement with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples** and their families to access the services that will best meet their needs.

Support & Networking

- Consultancy support for organisations & Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander workers
- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander community sector workers email group, network meetings & online exit survey
- Mentoring for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander workers

Training

- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Cultural Awareness Training
- Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Recruitment & Retention
- The Effects of Racism Within the Workplace
- Engagement of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Peoples

NAIDOC Award

- ACTCOSS & the Gulanga Program coordinate the NAIDOC Award for the Canberra & District Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Community Sector Worker of the Year

Contact Us

Interested in Gulanga resources and services? Please contact us!

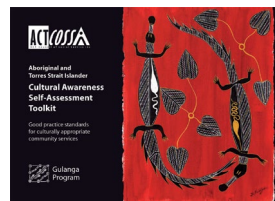
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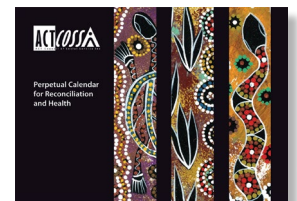
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Tools & Resources

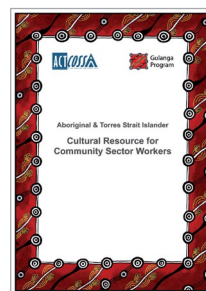
To assist services to better respond & deliver culturally appropriate services to Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander peoples:



Cultural Awareness Self-Assessment Toolkit (CASAT)



Perpetual Calendar for Reconciliation & Health



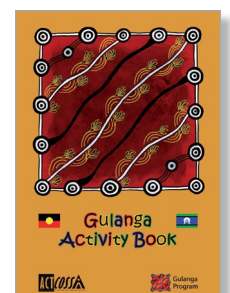
Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Cultural Resource for Community Sector Workers

Gulanga Information Sheets on topics such as recruitment & retention, & racism

Gulanga Good Practice Guides

Gulanga Activity Book

The Gulanga Activity Book was developed as one of the many ways you can assist your organisation to support your Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander families.



Find these resources on our website: www.actcoss.org.au