



AH&MRC

Board Shorts

And other essential news
from the AH&MRC

July 2014

Dear Members,

Welcome to the second edition of the AH&MRC's new bulletin, nicknamed **Board Shorts**. The purpose of Board Shorts is to inform members about relevant matters discussed by the Board, as well as other important and interesting items. In this edition, we offer a round-up of the latest meeting of the AH&MRC's Board of Directors, as well as a recap of the 2014 Federal Budget, upcoming events and more. We note the rapidly moving developments around funding at the state and national levels.

Yours in Aboriginal Health

Sandra Bailey
CEO, AH&MRC



[Board Meeting](#)

Attendance, alternate directors,
Constitutional Committee.



[2014 Federal Budget impact](#)

An outline of key issues 2014
Commonwealth Budget.

[News Briefs](#)

the end of Medicare Locals, farewell to
the Governor of NSW and more...



[Aboriginal Health College celebrates 2014 graduation](#)

209 students obtained Diplomas,
Certificates and Statements of Attainment
in the AH&MRC of NSW Aboriginal Health
College's seventh graduation ceremony



[Members Support Portal launching soon!](#)

The AH&MRC Organisational Health
Check portal is a key part of the
AH&MRC's sustainability strategy.



[AH&MRC advocacy activities](#)

AH&MRC advocacy efforts during the
April-June 2014 period. Including
partnership activities with NACCHO, the
NSW Government and CAPO.

Upcoming events

Please note some of the upcoming events we think might be of interest to our Members

17-19 July 2014, Sydney

[The International Indigenous Pre-Conference on HIV and AIDS](#)

20-25 July 2014 Melbourne

[AIDS2014 - International AIDS Conference](#)

Thu 17th Jul, 11:30am - Thu 17th Jul, 12:30pm, 2014

[Teleconference – Yarning About: Jaundice and the Sick Neonate](#)

Child Maternal Health

Tue 22nd Jul, 2:00pm - Tue 22nd Jul, 3:00pm, 2014

[Teleconference – Yarning About: Allied Health](#)

Chronic Disease

Mon 4th Aug, 10:00am - Mon 4th Aug, 4:00pm, 2014

[AH&MRC Ethics Committee Meeting](#)

Ethics Committee

Tue 12th Aug, 10:30am - Tue 12th Aug, 11:30am, 2014

[Teleconference – Yarning About: Eye Health and Diabetes](#)

Chronic Disease

Wed 20th Aug, 9:00am - Thu 21st Aug, 4:00pm, 2014

[IRIS Training – Orange](#)

Aboriginal Drug and Alcohol Network (ADAN)

Wed 3rd Sep, 1:00pm - Wed 3rd Sep, 2:00pm, 2014

[Teleconference – Yarning About: Principles of Pain Management](#)

Chronic Disease

News Briefs

Medicare Locals to cease in 2015

Medicare Locals will cease in 2015 and will be replaced by 17 Public Health Networks. There will be opportunities to work with new proposed Public Health Networks. The AH&MRC referred to a proposed visit to QAIHC to look at structure, roles and activities – and how these may be adapted for the ACCHS sector in NSW.

[For more information, read this FAQ.](#)

Farewell to the Governor of NSW

Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Dame Marie Bashir AC CVO, the Governor of NSW, has made her last presentation as Aboriginal Health College's Vice-Regal Patron at the Aboriginal Health College Graduation on 6 June 2014. The Governor has agreed to attend a Board farewell morning tea at the AH&MRC offices in Sydney on 27 August. The Governor was invited, and has accepted, to continue as Patron of the AHC following her role.

Peak Hill AMS gains accreditation

The AH&MRC offers congratulations to Peak Hill AMS on gaining their organisational accreditation.

AH&MRC Chronic Disease Conference presentations now available

Presentations from the Growing Stronger Living Longer: AH&MRC Chronic Disease Conference 2014 are now available.

[Click here to download.](#)

AH&MRC Board Meeting

Board

AH&MRC Board of Directors met on 27 and 28 May 2014, in Sydney. The Board noted that some Regions had not yet nominated their alternate Directors. There are two outstanding vacancies that are in the process of being filled. The next Board meeting will be held Tuesday 26 and Wednesday 27 August 2014.

Constitution Committee

Under the AH&MRC's policy of continuous improvement, the Constitutional Committee has met twice since the last Board meeting in February. The Committee is looking at ways that the Constitution might need to be changed to stay up to date with recent developments. The Constitutional Committee will continue to meet and make recommendations to the Board.

Federal Budget

We circulated to our members correspondence from Samantha Palmer, First Assistant Secretary, Indigenous and Rural Health Division (IHRD), dated 17 March and 17 April, advising that the Australian Government has agreed to a continuation of primary health care base funding during 2014-15 — including core funding for the affiliates for 2014/15. Following the handing down of the Federal Budget on 14 May, Samantha Palmer briefed NACCHO and Affiliates, including AH&MRC, about the details as they relate to Aboriginal health and in particular, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services. Funding for the sector has been confirmed for the next 12 months. An email outlining this detail was sent to AH&MRC and

has been forwarded to members for information.

If you didn't receive this, please let us know

In addition, there has been a strong reaction from the public to the proposed \$7 Medicare Co-payment. NACCHO and Affiliates released a media statement which prompted the Assistant Minister for Health, the Hon Fiona Nash, to teleconference with NACCHO and Affiliates to hear concerns. AH&MRC CEO also wrote to the NSW Premier, Mike Baird, expressing concern about the co-payment, prior to the Premiers special meeting in May.

If you would like a copy of any of these documents please let us know.

AH&MRC Partnerships and Advocacy

NACCHO - AH&MRC has been involved with NACCHO and fellow Affiliates in lobbying efforts on behalf of the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Services sector at the national level. NACCHO invited several Ministers and politicians to meet with the NACCHO Board and Affiliates at Parliament House. NACCHO has been promoting the ACCHS sector as being value for money and a good investment in the health of Aboriginal people.

CAPO – The NSW Coalition of Peak Aboriginal Organisations following a recent meeting, CAPO members will hold a planning workshop in July. We will keep you informed.

NSW Aboriginal Health Forum update - The CEO attended a meeting of the AHF on 20 May 2014. The AHF had not met for more than a year. We were advised that Allison Killon Assistant Secretary, IRHD is chairing the forums around the country. Members of the Forum are: AH&MRC, PM&C, Medicare Locals [which will be replaced by 'Primary Health Networks'] IRHD, NSW Ministry of Health. The Secretariat for the AHF is provided by LBF Consulting - based in Canberra. Items for discussion included nKPIs, the new Indigenous Advancement Strategy and its programmes being managed by the Department of the Prime Minister and Cabinet (PM&C).

NSW Health Aboriginal Health Partnership – While the guiding principles of the NSW Partnership hold enduring relevance, the Agreement is currently being reviewed. Two workshops have been held. Board noted the importance of renewing partnership agreements so they are clear and meaningful. The NSW Aboriginal Health Partnership and the importance of working with the AH&MRC and ACCHS is acknowledged in the 10 Year Aboriginal Health Plan.

Other partnerships –

The AH&MRC is also currently working with:

- The Brien Holden Vision Institute: The BHVI and the AH&MRC have been lobbying government in support of the free spectacles program under VisionCare, which has provided spectacles to more than 3,000 Aboriginal people in 120 locations around NSW. AH&MRC is concerned that clients will soon be asked to provide statements of income from Centrelink in order to receive spectacles. The AH&MRC has argued that disadvantage is widespread in the Aboriginal community and this would be a barrier to people wanting to access eye health services. The Brien Holden Vision Institute at UNSW, has supported the Aboriginal projects regarding eye health for the past 15 years.
- The Sax Institute - The AH&MRC and the Sax Institute, making up the Coalition for Research to Improve Aboriginal Health – CRIAH, have held three Aboriginal health research conferences since 2005. The next CRIAH Research conference has been deferred from 2015 to 2016 due to the limited capacity of AH&MRC at present.

Aboriginal Health College celebrates successful 2014 graduation

Over 200 people – graduates, families, friends and special guests – packed the auditorium of the Aboriginal Health College (AHC) in Little Bay for the Aboriginal Health College’s seventh graduation ceremony, held on 6 June 2014.

The day proved an inspiration for all who attended, featuring eminent keynote speakers, wonderful performances, most important of all, the recognition of 151 full qualification graduates and 58 Statement of Attainment recipients.

The ceremony was held in the presence of the Aboriginal Health College’s vice-regal patron, Her Excellency Professor the Honourable Dame Marie Bashir AC CVO, Governor of New South Wales and was officially opened by the event’s Master of Ceremonies, Dr Robyn Shields AM, NSW Deputy Mental Health Commissioner. Uncles Les Davison provided the welcome to country.

Those attending the ceremony initially heard speeches from:

- Christine Corby OAM, CM, CEO of Walgett Aboriginal I Medical Service and Chairperson of the AH&MRC
- Professor Brian Layland OAM, Director of Aboriginal Programmes, Brien Holden Vision Institute
- The Honourable Linda Burney, Member for Canterbury, Deputy Leader of the Opposition, Shadow Minister for Family and Community Services, Shadow Minister for Early Childhood Education, Shadow Minister for Aboriginal Affairs, and Shadow Minister for the Central Coast.

The ceremony included some outstanding performances by the Wagana Dance group, who led a procession of graduating students into the auditorium and enthralled all in attendance with their dancing. Moving performances also came from the Mt Druitt Indigenous Choir, which included young Aboriginal children singing in traditional language.

Another highlight of the day was John Delaney’s presentation to the students offering a rare glimpse into the way life has changed – and hasn’t changed – for Aboriginal people in NSW over the years. Pauline Wicks provided the graduand’s speech in reply. Val Keed, Deputy Chair AH&MRFC and Pat Delaney, AM, two notable elders were also acknowledged during the event for their leadership and contribution to Aboriginal Health. Graduates from full qualification courses included those successfully completing a Certificate III course (one course), Certificate IV courses (six courses), Diploma course (four courses) and an Advanced Diploma (1 course). The Statement of Attainments came from these courses, as well as from four short courses.

Thanks to all those who helped make the 2014 graduation one of the best yet, and we look forward to another special day in 2015.

AH&MRC Sector Sustainability Strategy and Member Support Project

Following recent Members meetings, including Meeting Ground Workshops held in 2013 and 2014, and in response to the significant changes in government policy and funding models, the AH&MRC has continued to work towards sector sustainability including sustainability of the important services we are able to provide.

The AH&MRC is in the process of implementing the Organisational Health Check and portal (accessed via the AH&MRC website), which is soon to go live.

The Board considered the tabled *AH&MRC Sector Support and Sustainability Strategy and Member Support Project Discussion Paper* and discussed implementation issues. AH&MRC will

provide a formal communication to members in the near future.

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