



THE UNIVERSITY OF
**WESTERN
AUSTRALIA**

Healthy Minds, Healthy Lives

Poche Centre for Indigenous Health

Highlights 2018–2019





The Poche Centre for Indigenous Health at The University of Western Australia acknowledges the Whadjuk Noongar people as the traditional owners of the land on which we are situated and we pay our respects to Elders past and present.

Smoking Ceremony, Bilya Marlee site

Message from the Director



The UWA Poche Centre for Indigenous Health is made possible by the generous gift of leading philanthropists Greg Poche AO and Kay Van Norton Poche AO in 2013 and their continuing support, with Reg and Sally Richardson for our UWA Poche Centre.



Now in our sixth year, we have been very busy since the Poche Indigenous Health Network meeting in Adelaide in 2018. This included two major conferences, an Indigenous youth cultural exchange day and stakeholder workshops in three states. We undertook a number of health research projects with our partners, developed teaching and curriculum resources and published a number of key reports. We have continued our strong community engagement and outreach in regional Western Australia through the WA Centre for Rural Health and nationally with our partner organisations.



In 2019 we successfully competed for research funding, receiving a total of \$6.3m in new funding for UWA Poche, which we are pleased to say includes Poche Melbourne and PIHN. We look forward to new research staff joining our Poche Centre in the next 12 months. UWA Poche is committed to Indigenous leadership development, particularly for our health students, and celebrated five new Indigenous Medical graduates at the end of 2018, four of whom had received Poche Leadership Awards during their studies. This once again highlights the importance of supporting and continuing to encourage our Indigenous health students

and we are excited to see what the future holds for them and the UWA Poche Centre.

The UWA Poche Centre for Indigenous health continues to strongly focus and recognise Aboriginal knowledge and cultural understanding in health and promoting wellbeing and positive mental health for Aboriginal people. In July 2020, we look forward to opening of our new Indigenous building *Bilya Marlee*, which will house the School of Indigenous Studies, the Centre for Aboriginal Medical and Dental Health and the UWA Poche Centre. We had the the turning of the soil and smoking ceremony led by Dr Richard Walley OAM in May, to commence construction. *Bilya Marlee* is a Noongar word that translates as ‘river of the swan’ and we look forward to welcoming the Poche network to our new home.

Professor Jill Milroy
Poche Executive Director
Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous Education



Turning of the soil, *Bilya Marlee* site
Artist's impression, courtesy of Kerry Hill Architects

Research Programs and Development

The Poche Centre for Indigenous Health brings together the University's expertise, program and resources in Aboriginal health and education around a central theme Healthy Minds Healthy Lives.

The Centre aims to drive a transformative intergenerational Aboriginal health research agenda, which delivers tangible, measurable health outcomes and services directly to Aboriginal people and communities. The Poche Centre at UWA undertakes research, teaching and community engagement across a broad spectrum of Aboriginal health and education areas.

The Centre has identified three key focus areas:

Culture Wellbeing and Mental Health

Recognising Aboriginal knowledge and cultural understanding in health and promoting wellbeing and positive mental health for Aboriginal young people.

Aboriginal Children's Health and Development

Improving health, disability and development outcomes for Aboriginal children by improving access to, and quality of care delivered by Aboriginal and mainstream health service providers.

Better Preventions and Management of Chronic Disease

Providing health service interventions for better preventions and management of cancer and cardiovascular in Aboriginal people in rural areas.





Indigenous students at the 24th Indigenous Nationals



Opening ceremony for the 2nd National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Suicide Prevention Conference and the 2nd World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference

Key Highlights 2018–2019

The Centre for Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention (CBPATSISP)

The Centre for Best Practice is major UWA Poche initiative, led by Poche Fellow Professor Pat Dudgeon, which was established in 2017 after a successful funding bid to the Department of Health for \$1.75m over 2 years. The Centre aims to reduce the causes, prevalence and impact of suicide on Indigenous individuals, families and communities by identifying, translating and promoting the adoption of best practice in Indigenous specific suicide prevention activity.

In 2019, the Centre for Best Practice in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention successfully tendered for an extension of its funding from the Department of Health, receiving \$1.4million from July 2019–2021. The Centre’s recent key recent achievements include the following events and programs:

- Two major conferences in November 2018, the *2nd National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Suicide Prevention Conference* and the *2nd World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference*. The conferences attracted over 550 delegates from across Australia and internationally. The WA Deputy Premier and Minister of Health, the Hon Roger Cook opened the National Conference, with the Hon Ken Wyatt, the then Minister for Indigenous Health, opening the World Conference, which was also attended by the High

Commissioner for Canada, H.E. Vice Admiral Paul Maddison.

- The *World Indigenous Youth Cultural Exchange Day* preceded the conferences. A music video *LOVE and HOPE* based on a song developed by Indigenous youth at our conferences, was launched by CBPATSISP and Culture is Life in March 2019. View the music video at <https://www.cultureislife.org/>
- Two key national reports, from our joint project with Black Dog Institute – *Implementing Integrated Suicide Prevention in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Communities: A Guide for Primary Health Networks* (August 2018) and *We are not the problem, we are part of the solution: Indigenous Lived Experience Project Report* (November 2018).
- Three stakeholder workshops and reports on *Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Declaration Implementation and Indigenous Governance Framework* in Queensland, Victoria and NSW (Nov 2018 – May 2019) in partnership with the National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership in Mental Health (NATSILMH).
- The *Empowerment and Accountability in Indigenous Youth Suicide Prevention* workshop in Canberra (April 2019) in partnership with the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Advisory Group, supported by Department of Prime Minister and Cabinet.

For further information and to download reports from the above see: <https://www.cbpatsisp.com.au/>



Million Minds Mission: Generating Indigenous patient-centred, clinically and culturally capable models of mental health care

In 2019 UWA Poche led a successful bid for research funding from the *NHMRC Medical Research Future Fund (MRFF) Million Minds Mission*. We were awarded \$4.9 million over 5 years (2019-2024) to improve the delivery of mental health services. Led by Poche Fellow Professor Pat Dudgeon, our team includes UWA researchers Professor Helen Milroy, Professor Sean Hood, Professor Michael Small and Professor Roz Walker, Associate Professor Michael Wright from Curtin University, Dr Graham Gee, Victorian Health Service as well as our Poche Partners, Professor Shaun Ewen, Melbourne Poche and Professor Tom Calma, PIHN.

Our community partners include the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, the Healing Foundation, Kimberley Aboriginal Medical Service, and Langford Aboriginal Corporation. The research will test models in 'real world' mental health service settings which will then be developed for primary mental health and specialist services, both for Indigenous and mainstream users and feature integrated mental health, alcohol and drug, suicide prevention and social and emotional wellbeing services and enhanced workforce capabilities to meet complex needs.



2nd National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders Suicide Prevention Conference and the 2nd World Indigenous Suicide Prevention Conference – November 2018



The Prevention and Management of Chronic Disease for Aboriginal people

Providing health services interventions for better preventions and management of chronic diseases in Aboriginal people in rural areas, Dr Thompson and her team at the WA Centre for Rural Health (WACHR) have continued to focus and deliver on this important health area, particularly cardiovascular disease and cancer.

As well as improvement in health services, the team continues to focus on the need to reduce the chronic disease burden suffered by Aboriginal people and to develop greater understanding of health literacy and early interventions approaches. A key focus is on Aboriginal community engagement including young people.

Heath Greville has joined the Poche team at WACHR taking on a major role in support of Aboriginal staff. Heath has a wealth of experience working with Aboriginal people, in community development and in Aboriginal education.

Lenny Papertalk has played a major role in the partnership with the Mitchell St activities for Aboriginal young people, was instrumental in helping with the videos of Aboriginal people with cancer and will assist with the ongoing dissemination and education. Lenny has commenced a Masters of Social Work supported by a scholarship from Rural Health West.



Dr Sandra Thompson, Heath Greville and Lenny Papertalk

Poche Leadership Development Awards

An important aspect of the UWA Poche Centre for Indigenous Health is investing in our student's future to become leaders in medicine, dentistry and health sciences. We do by building leadership skills, knowledge and experience through Poche Leadership Development Awards which enable Indigenous health students to engage in events, conferences, field trips and courses at local, national and international levels.

Since our last report we have sponsored a major national sporting event, supported a psychology curriculum project and made five leadership awards to Indigenous health students.

- UWA Poche was a major sponsor of the UniSport Australia *24th Indigenous Nationals* from 23-27 June 2019. Organised by WASAC (UWA's Indigenous student body) and UWA Sport, more than 400 Indigenous student athletes from 25 universities across Australia competed in the sporting, cultural and social events. This is a great example of Indigenous students' leadership in celebrating culture, recognising sporting excellence and promoting active, healthy lifestyles.
- UWA Poche enabled Simone Harrington, an Indigenous Bachelor of Psychology Honours student to undertake an Indigenous curriculum project with the School of Psychological Sciences over the summer period. Simone is studying a PhD and Master of Clinical Psychology in 2019.
- Doctor of Medicine student, Naomi Lloyd received a Poche award to assist with her *Medical Elective in Nepal* (Dec 2018 – Jan 2019, which broadened her medical knowledge and global cultural understanding.
- Aaron Sutton was supported to undertake a *Population Health field trip* to India (late 2018) in his final semester in the Bachelor of Biomedical Science. Aaron Sutton is a mature student, originally from Tennant Creek (NT) who is married with three girls under 7. Students were able to interact with local communities and health professionals, develop an ethical sense of social responsibility, identify regional health issues and develop cultural communication skills.
- Doctor of Medicine students Kirsty McLean, Tamika Ponton and Paris Dickerson were assisted to attend the *Australian Indigenous Doctors Association Conference: Vision into Action* from 26-28 September 2018. The conference is a positive professional development and network opportunity for medical students.





Indigenous Medical graduates Kelly Langford, Tamisha King, Heather Kessariss, Shauna Hill and Adriane Houghton



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