

2024 NSW ABORIGINAL MENTAL HEALTH & WELLBEING WORKFORCE FORUM



OUR DEADLY WAYS
Celebrating the past, living in the present,
dreaming for the future

5th & 6th June 2024
The Fullerton Hotel Sydney

WELCOME TO SYDNEY!

2024 NSW Aboriginal Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Forum

'Our Deadly Ways - celebrating our past, living in the present, dreaming for the future'

In 2024 the Aboriginal Mental Health & Wellbeing Workforce Forum will be celebrating a significant milestone, '30 Years of the Djirruwang Program'.

The Forum will be hosted by the Mental Health Branch in partnership with the Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council (AH&MRC) and Charles Sturt University, on the 5th and 6th June 2024.

The two day event will be held in Sydney on Gadigal Country at The Fullerton Hotel Sydney with a special Gala Event at the Ivy Ballroom to celebrate the 30 Year Anniversary of the Djirruwang Program.

The theme for 2024 is 'Our Deadly Ways, celebrating the past, living in the present, dreaming for the future'. The theme was chosen by the Forum Working Party to reflect and celebrate those who came before us, the opportunities for our workforce now and in the future.

The event attracts over 200 delegates from services across the state, including NSW Health, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations, Non-Government agencies and more.

The Forum provides an opportunity to network and connect with peers in mental health, social and emotional wellbeing including alcohol and other drugs. It offers an opportunity to engage, collaborate and share journeys that are culturally appropriate and responsive to the needs of Aboriginal people, carers, families and communities, and learn from industry and subject matter experts on Aboriginal mental health and wellbeing.

WEDNESDAY 5TH JUNE 2024

The Fullerton Sydney, Heritage Ballroom

8:00am	Registrations Open <i>Heritage Ballroom Foyer</i>
8:15am	Smoking Ceremony <i>Raymond Weatherall, Martin Place - outside entrance to hotel</i>
9:00am	Welcome to Country <i>Raymond Weatherall, Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council</i>
9:10am	Master of Ceremonies <i>Dr Paul Callaghan, Callaghan Cultural Consultancy</i>
9:20am	Cultural Performance <i>The Glen Dance Group</i>
9:50am	Opening Address <i>Aboriginal Mental Health & Medical Research Council Dr Brendan Flynn, Executive Director, Mental Health Branch</i>
10:25am	MORNING TEA
10:45am	Keynote Presentation <i>Rachel Fishlock, Chief Executive Officer, Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia</i>
11:35am	Delivering an Aboriginal-led Model of Mental Health and Wellbeing Care into Central West NSW <i>Melanie Noble CAH, Ministry of Health & Cathy Sheridan, AOD and Mental Health Worker, Weigelli Centre Aboriginal Corporation</i>
11:55am	Sorry Business is Everyone's Business <i>Bruce Cohen and Fiona Lovelock</i>
12:15pm	Integrating Online Tools for Your Self-Care & Workplace Wellbeing <i>David Edwards and Angela Sheridan, WellMob, USYD</i>
12:45pm	LUNCH
1:30pm	The Hon. Rose Jackson MLC - Minister for Mental Health, Housing, Homelessness, Youth, Water and North Coast

2:00pm	Unlocking the Power of Indigenous Co-Design and Intervention: Transformative Outcomes Through Authentic Collaboration <i>Professor Maree Toombs, Associate Dean Indigenous, UNSW</i>
2:50pm	Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation <i>Dr Tiffany McComsey, CEO, Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation</i>
3:10pm	AFTERNOON TEA
3:30PM	Weaving/Cultural Workshop <i>Malima</i>
4:45pm	Wrap Up and Close
5:00pm - 7:00pm	NETWORKING EVENT - SUPPORTED BY THE AH&MRC <i>Performance by Maddi Lyn Music</i> <i>Heritage Ballroom Foyer</i>

THURSDAY 6TH JUNE 2024

The Fullerton Sydney, Heritage Ballroom

8:30am	Registrations Open <i>Heritage Ballroom Foyer</i>
9:00am	Welcome Back, Recap of Day 1 and Overview of Day 2 <i>Dr Paul Callaghan, Callaghan Cultural Consultancy</i>
9:15am	Keynote Address <i>Ms Susan Pearce AM, Secretary, NSW Health</i>
9:25am	Keynote Address <i>Matthew Trindall, Director, Aboriginal Mental Health</i>
9:35am	Keynote Presentation <i>Natalie Siegel-Brown, Commissioner (Social Policy), Productivity Commission</i>
10:25am	MORNING TEA
10:45am	Our Deadly Ways, Celebrating the Past, Living in the Present, Dreaming for the Future - Panel Discussion <i>Lua Pellegrini, Hiallie Rose Jeffries, Tom Brideson</i>

11:30am **Two Men in Your Head**
Damien House & Grant Cameron, Cancer Institute NSW

11:50am **The AOD Hub Model: The Wagga Wagga Recovery Hub Example of Integrated Wellbeing Services**
Tina Taylor, Senior Engagement Officer, COAD & Tom Booth, Services Manager, The Salvation Army AOD Services

12:15pm **LUNCH**

1:15pm **Keynote Presentation: Yarning Knowledge Strengthens Clinical Practice, Health Education and Research**
Professor Rhonda Wilson RN CMHN PhD, Professor of Mental Health and Nursing, RMIT

1:55pm **Redesigning the Future: Empowerment to Innovate and Change**
Tricia Cummins, Associate Director, Agency for Clinical Innovation

2:20pm **Building Aboriginal Communities' Resilience: Suicide Prevention and Aboriginal Community Led Service Delivery**
Casey Naden, Care & Recovery Lead, Orange Aboriginal Medical Service & Kerry Smith, Principal Policy Officer, Mental Health Branch

2:40pm **Enhancing Cultural Support for Children and Adolescents within the CICADA Drug & Alcohol Service**
Bronwyn Milne, Snr Staff Specialist, Aboriginal Care Navigator & Lauren Jones, Aboriginal Care Navigator

3:00pm **AFTERNOON TEA**

3:15pm **Our Deadly Ways Trivia**
Hosted by The Planning Committee

3:50pm **Wrap Up and Close**

6:15pm - 10:30pm **Gala Event - Celebrating 30 Years of the Djirruwang Program**
Ivy Ballroom, Level 1/320 George Street

FORUM EVENTS

NETWORKING EVENT

*Wednesday 5th June, 5pm - 7pm,
The Fullerton Hotel, Heritage Ballroom Foyer*

Supported by the AH&MRC

The networking event will be held at the end of day 1, in the foyer just outside of the Heritage room where the Forum is being held. This is an opportunity to continue conversations from the day, create new connections, and strengthen current relationships. Canapes and refreshments will be provided with Maddi Lyn (an Aboriginal singer/songwriter) providing some entertainment.

Gala Event

*Thursday 6th June, 6:30pm - 10:30pm,
The Ivy Ballroom, 320 George Street Sydney*

Djirruwang 30 Year Anniversary Gala Event NSW Health in partnership with Charles Sturt University

The Djirruwang Program will celebrate its 30 Year Anniversary on the evening of 6th June. We will be commemorating this significant milestone with a Gala Event to be held at the beautiful Ivy Ballroom, a two minute walk from The Fullerton Hotel where the Forum is being held.

The Djirruwang Program was developed in collaboration with Aboriginal community-based organisations, the mental health industry, and Charles Sturt University to meet the needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. Since the program's inception in 1993, over 270 Aboriginal people have graduated through Djirruwang in NSW. The Djirruwang program is creating and nurturing Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander leaders who hold the vital knowledge we need for a culturally sensitive mental health workforce.

GUEST SPEAKERS

DR PAUL CALLAGHAN - MC

Callaghan Cultural Consultancy



DR Paul Callaghan is an Aboriginal man belonging to the land of the Worimi people, now called Port Stephens.

Paul has held several senior executive positions in his career including CEO of New England TAFE where he had responsibility for 1,200 staff, 23,000 students and an annual budget of \$65million. He has qualifications in surveying, drafting, commerce, training, executive leadership, company boards and executive coaching. He also has a PhD in Creative Practice. His most important learning however, has been through going bush with Elders.

Paul is also an author. His book, *The Dreaming Path* became a best seller in Australia in September, 2022 and received the Australian Book Industry Award for Small Publisher's Adult Book of the Year in 2023. It has also been published in France and Germany and the USA. He has recently written a book on leadership that will be released in 2025.

THE HON ROSE JACKSON MLC

Minister for Mental Health, Housing, Homelessness, Youth, Water and North Coast



Rose Jackson is a Labor Member of the NSW Legislative Council and Minister for Mental Health, Housing, Homelessness, Youth, Water and the North Coast. Rose was elected to the Legislative Council in May 2019 and has been fighting for real action on climate change and tackling homelessness and housing affordability.

Rose has also held a variety of roles within the labour and union movement including Assistant Secretary of NSW Labor and as an official for United Voice (formerly LHMU). Rose lives with her family in Rockdale and is passionate about making our society fairer for everyone.

DR BRENDAN FLYNN

Executive Director, Mental Health Branch MoH



Dr Brendan Flynn is the Executive Director, Mental Health Branch, NSW Ministry of Health. This role provides advice to relevant Ministers, the NSW Health Secretary, and the Deputy Secretary (Health System Strategy and Planning) on trends and issues in mental health services, in order to inform policy decision making. The Executive Director also leads the regulatory activities of the Mental Health Branch in order to meet statutory and policy requirements.

Dr Flynn's professional interests include medical education, health leadership and mental health policy. He is a psychogeriatrician with a particular interest in co-morbid psychiatric disorders in early dementia.

RACHEL FISHLOCK

CEO Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia



Rachel is a proud descendant of the Yuin Nation and is the Chief Executive Officer of Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia.

Driven by lived experience of systemic neglect as a child carer, Rachel aspires to create systemic change to the Australian mental health system, particularly for children and caring arrangements. She works to achieve the highest attainable standard of social and emotional wellbeing, mental health, and suicide prevention outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Rachel has more than a decade of experience in health, including the optometry industry and community-controlled sector. She has worked at the National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) and held senior roles at Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia. Rachel holds a Bachelor of Social Sciences (Social Policy) and Master of Business Management from the University of Wollongong. Rachel was recognised by Lifeline Canberra as the 2022 Rising Woman of Spirit for her outstanding community spirit and resilience in the face of adversity, continuing to push for reforms to ensure other children do not experience the same systemic neglect she did.

Rachel sits on the Fearless Women Board and the Capital Health Network Board.

CATHY SHERIDAN

AOD and Mental Health Field Worker, Weigelli Centre Aboriginal Corporation



Cathy is a proud Gamilaroi woman with ancestral ties to Wiradjuri country which she now lives and works. Cathy has worked in the sector for over 15 years, and has broad experience across AOD, homelessness, domestic violence, mental health and disability supported accommodation. In her current role, she provides outreach / aftercare to Aboriginal and non-Indigenous men and women across Forbes, Parkes, Peak Hill, Condobolin, Lake Cargelligo and Murrin Bridge. She walks alongside people so they can return to their family, mob, communities to lead happy, healthy productive lives.

MELANIE NOBLE

Centre for Aboriginal Health

Melanie joined the Centre for Aboriginal Health in January 2023, as a Senior Policy Officer with the Strategic Engagement and Relationships team, with a focus on fostering strong relationships between the Ministry and the Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Sector. She has Bachelor of Science with Honours in Psychology from the University of New South Wales, a Master of Public Health with the University of Sydney, an Advanced Diploma of Community Sector Management and a Graduate Diploma in Public Sector Management from the Queensland University of Technology. Melanie has a passion for mental health and social justice. Prior to joining the Centre, Melanie worked for 8 years managing frontline psychosocial mental health services around Inner West and Western Sydney before moving into mental health policy in 2018 at the NSW Ministry of Health. As a non-Indigenous person working in the Indigenous health space, Melanie is grateful to have experienced strong Aboriginal leadership to guide her work and acknowledges the sharing of cultural knowledge she has gained from Aboriginal colleagues, stakeholders and clients.

PHILLIP WILLIAMS

Policy Officer, Closing the Gap, Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council of NSW (AH&MRC)



Phillip is an Aboriginal man born and raised in Armidale and now living in Redfern. He is a Policy Officer for the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW. Phillip started his career as an Aboriginal Health Worker Trainee with the Aboriginal Medical Service Redfern in 2005, where he worked for over 16 years. He has completed a Graduate Diploma of Indigenous Health Promotion at the University of Sydney and is currently enrolled in their Master of Public Health. Phil is a proud dad of six children and during his spare time, regularly volunteers with the Redfern All Blacks, where he has been a player, coach, and trainer for over 20 years.

BRUCE COHEN

My name is Bruce Cohen. I am an Aboriginal Man from the Gumbaynggirr, Thungutti and Anaiwan, Nations, Armidale and New England and the Mid North Coast areas. I have over 30 years' experience within various Government agencies, such as the Aboriginal Legal Service, Department Justice and Attorney General, the NSW Police Force and the Department of Environment & Climate Change Water, Culture & Heritage Division, Hunter and New England Area Health Service Mental Health, Armidale Rural Base Hospital.

I have extensive experience, in Native Title, Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Legislation, NSW Legal Justice System, NSW Health and Mental Health policies and procedures.

Additional Experience:

- Director of the Wanggaan (Southern) Gumbaynggirr Nation Aboriginal Corporation RNTBC
- Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Officer for the Gumbaynggirr Descendant
- I have over 85 registered Aboriginal Cultural Heritage Sites, 2 Aboriginal Place Sites on the NSW AHIMS data base.
- I have been actively involved with 2 successful Native Title Claims that has been passed through the High Court of Australia within the last 5 years.
- The Wanggaan (Southern) Gumbaynggirr Nation Claim.
- The Boney (Southern) Gumbaynggirr Nation Claim.

FIONA LOVELOCK

Fiona is a proud Anewan woman from Armidale on the northern New England Tablelands with blood ties to the Dhungutti and Gumbaynggirr nations. She currently works with adult offenders, their victims, and the local community.

DAVID EDWARDS

WellMob, eMHPrac



David Edwards is a Worimi man who works from University of Sydney's University for Rural Health in Lismore NSW as the Director of the WellMob project, under the national e-Mental Health in Practice project. David has an environmental science and Indigenous health promotion background. David is a member of the Dept of Health's National Digital Mental Health Advisory Group along with other national mental health reference groups to advocate for culturally informed practice for First Nations Australians. David is also a voluntary trainer for the Core of Life pregnancy and child birth education program for young people.

ANGELA SHERIDAN

WellMob, eMHPrac



Angela Sheridan is a Wiradjuri woman from central NSW. She has grown up in Lismore, Widjabul Wyabul country in the Bundjalung nation of northern NSW. Angela was involved in the original community and health worker yarning circles with the WellMob project of which informed the community led participatory research and development of the WellMob project into its current form of a website library of resources. Angela is a grass roots community member, and her lived experience has led her to find her passion of Indigenous social and emotional wellbeing. She has previously worked in community-controlled health service on an Asset based Community Development project and as an Aboriginal health/community worker. Now she is a project officer in the WellMob website project team and manages social media content creation.

PROFESSOR MAREE TOOMBS

Associate Dean Indigenous, University of New South Wales



A leading researcher in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander health, Professor Toombs is a proud Euralayie/Kooma woman from North-Western NSW, and a distinguished researcher with a depth of experience in leadership roles. Working across research, health and education, Professor Toombs has a track record of impactful work, improving the lives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Professor Toombs is highly recognised for her work, and in 2023 she was awarded the prestigious Australian Mental Health Prize. As a leader in the field of Indigenous health, Professor Toombs was invited to join a 2023 Australian Mission delegation to the United Nations, in New York.

Partnering locally and internationally, Professor Toombs's expertise in codesign and culturally safe practices is foundational to her global impact. She has developed models of care with over 94 different Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, improving the health of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. As a former Churchill Fellowship recipient, Professor Toombs worked with Canadian universities on retention rates for Indigenous students, and has developed partnerships with First Nations peoples across Canada. Her research on social and emotional well-being of Indigenous students has also led to significant improvements in the completion rates of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander university students. In collaboration with the Faculty of Medicine & Health's Aboriginal Sovereign Strategy Group, Professor Toombs will establish an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health and Wellbeing Unit, that will have Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education, research and community at the forefront to ensure UNSW Medicine and Health create a culturally safe environment.

DR TIFFANY MCCOMSEY

CEO, Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation

Tiffany is CEO of Stolen Generations Survivor Led organisation - Kinchela Boys Home Aboriginal Corporation where she has worked for over 12 years. She has spent close to two decades working and advocating with Aboriginal community members and organisations in inner city Sydney. Tiffany has a PhD in Social Anthropology and was the inaugural coordinator of Just Reinvest NSW.

SUSAN PEARCE AM

Secretary, NSW



Susan Pearce AM is Secretary, NSW Health, appointed in March 2022. In this role, Susan is responsible for the management of the NSW health system - with over 120,000 FTE and a budget of over \$30 billion - to ensure the provision of world-class, patient-centred care to the people of NSW.

Prior to her recent appointment, Susan was Deputy Secretary, Patient Experience and System Performance Division, a position she has held from November 2015. In that role, Susan had responsibility for the oversight of front-end service delivery and system performance and management across NSW Health, and improving patient experience.

Susan was also the Controller of the State Health Emergency Operations Centre (SHEOC), responsible for directing and overseeing NSW Health's operational response to the pandemic. From February 2021, Susan led the NSW Health vaccine rollout program, establishing over 40 NSW Health vaccination clinics and more than 100 mobile, outreach and pop-up locations across the state to contribute to the high vaccination rate that have been achieved amongst the people of NSW.

Susan began her career as a registered nurse more than 30 years ago in Broken Hill and has continually worked to serve the communities of NSW< including working in a number of Local Health Districts and subsequently as the NSW Chief Nurse. Susan has qualifications in Law and was admitted to the Supreme Court of NSW as a solicitor in September 2019.

Susan was appointed a Member of the Order of Australia in April 2023.

MATTHEW TRINDALL

Director, Aboriginal Mental Health



Matthew Trindall is the Director Aboriginal Mental Health, NSW Mental Health Branch. Matthew started his career in Aboriginal mental health in 2007 as a mental health trainee with Hunter New England Local Health District in NSW. His previous role was the Director Aboriginal Strategy and Culture at Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network. Matthew has a strong emphasis on population health, advocacy, policy reform, governance and accountability.

NATALIE SIEGEL-BROWN

Commissioner for Social Policy, Australian Productivity Commission



Natalie is Commissioner for Social Policy at the Australian Productivity Commission, a member of the Queensland Independent Truth and Treaty Body, and a specialist advisor to the UN and Fijian Government in child protection and justice. Natalie is also a Board Member of Ageing and Disability Advocacy Australia.

Prior to being Commissioner, Natalie was the Queensland Public Guardian. As the government-appointed oversight body for child protection, youth justice, mental health and disability, Natalie was the legislated independent human rights defender for the States most vulnerable children and adults. Her role was the only government appointment in the World with powers to investigate and intervene in elder abuse.

Natalie began life as a lawyer, working with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in domestic and family violence and crime prevention. Her career includes roles at the former Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission and the Australian Human Rights Commission. Over the last two decades, Natalie's has worked for communities and Aboriginal Community Controlled Organisations from Cape York to the Kimberley.

Natalie spent a number of years as the State Manager of the Queensland Government's family violence portfolio where she was awarded for leadership excellence in family violence prevention. After managing the child protection, sexual violence and mental health portfolios of an Aboriginal Medical Service in the remote Kimberley region of Western Australia, she conducted child death reviews, analysing and recommending positive reforms to address systemic child protection and early intervention failures in both Victoria and Western Australia.

DAMIEN HOUSE

Cancer Institute NSW

Damien House is a proud Aboriginal man from Sydney his community is Redfern. Damien began his career as an Aboriginal Health worker working in Gastroenterology, Liver disease. Damien worked with AMS Redfern and created a successful program to educate Redfern community about the harms of Hepatitis C. He has worked with Royal Prince Alfred Sexual Health clinic before moving to the Ministry of Health working on Population health program, Make Healthy Normal. Damien has been working in Aboriginal health for the past 10 years supporting changes in Aboriginal health. Two Men In Your Head was born out of an idea to support Aboriginal men to talk about Mental health issues. Damien grew up in institutions and foster care with that comes a lot of risk which he survived. Damien and Grant met whilst working in Redfern supporting young people. Damien worked with UNSW for 8 years educating medical students on engagement practices with Aboriginal people. Damien is currently doing a Bachelor of Health science with Charles Sturt University, Djirruwang program a focus on Aboriginal Mental health. Damien's most recent role is with the Cancer Institute as the Program Lead Close the Gap, Better Cancer Outcomes for NSW Aboriginal peoples, and communities NSW. He is a changemaker and content creator of Two Men In Your Head on KOORI radio 93.7 FM Live and Deadly that talks about Aboriginal Men's Mental Health.

GRANT CAMERON

Cancer Institute of NSW

Grant is a proud Kamilaroi man with family ties to Tamworth and is a very proud father of three children. He began his career as a tradesman working in upholstery and antique restoration, then moved to NCIE in 2014 as the children's services program coordinator. The following year he was promoted to youth leadership coordinator, responsible for designing programs and workshops. This included a youth camp to Uluru and Kata Tjuta in the Northern Territory. From 2016 to 2020 Grant held several positions with Indigenous Digital Excellence, eventually serving as national manager of the \$6.5 million partnership with the Telstra Foundation. He successfully delivered a national technology program called FLINT to more than 30 remote and regional Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across the country. Grant's most recent role was with the Australian Rural Leadership Foundation, as manager of leadership programs. A key part of the role was the delivery of leadership and resilience programs in remote, rural and regional Australia. He worked closely with First Nations communities to develop tailored curricula that addressed various issues such as truth telling, gender, inclusion, equality, power and privilege. Grant is a competitive mountain biker who loves coaching his sons' oz tag and soccer teams. He is a regular broadcaster on Koori Radio, where he discusses men's mental health.

TOM BOOTH

The Salvation Army

Tom is the Services Manager for The Salvation Army's AOD Services in Canberra and Wagga Wagga, which incorporates Canberra Recovery Service, a 37 Bed Residential Unit, Canberra Recovery Hub, a Community Day Program, and the new Wagga Wagga Recovery Hub. Tom has worked in the AOD and Community Development Sector for over 20 years, delivering and managing services in the UK, Southeast Asia and Australia.

TINA TAYLOR

South Western Sydney LHD

Tina Taylor is a proud Ngiyampaa Wailwan woman. Tina is the Program Coordinator for SWSLHD's Drug Health Services Aboriginal Health Multidisciplinary Team which provides a service to Aboriginal consumers, Aboriginal Families and Aboriginal Communities engaging in drug and alcohol use and associated behaviour. The team provides a culturally responsive service, with care navigation and therapeutic interventions delivered within a cultural framework, integrated and collaborative care for clients working in partnership with local ACCHO's. In June Tina will commence her new role at the Centre for Alcohol & Other Drugs as the Senior Engagement Officer to lead the Centre's engagement and collaboration with Aboriginal organisations, consumers, researchers and communities, including Chairing the Aboriginal Strategic Collaboration Group (ASCG).

RHONDA WILSON

Professor of Mental Health Nursing, RMIT University



Professor Rhonda Wilson is an internationally recognised mental health nursing scientist with a research focus on digital health interventions. She is Professor of Mental Health Nursing at RMIT University where she leads an innovative digital mental health nursing laboratory. As a Wiradjuri (First Nation) descendent, she is a vigorous advocate and activist for the promotion of cultural safety and decolonisation in our education, research and health institutions. She has published extensively in international journals, books and conferences. She has a track record of leading national and international mental health mixed methods research programs, including using methods suited to priority populations, and First Nations peoples. Professor Wilson has worked in a wide range of clinical registered nursing and academic roles in Australia, Denmark and New Zealand. She leads her profession in Australia as the current President of Australian College of Mental Health Nurses.

TRICIA CUMMINS

Agency for Clinical Innovation



In her role at the NSW Health Agency for Clinical Innovation, Trish oversees the strategic direction for the Healthcare Redesign program, change management, innovation and co-design capability, and consumer partnerships. Trish has over 30 years' experience in health spanning clinical, education and change management roles and is passionate about building individual and system capability for inclusive, transformational change and making a difference to the experience of those both delivering and receiving care.

BRONWYN MILNE

CICADA Drug & Alcohol Service

Dr Bronwyn Milne is a Paediatrician and Addiction Medicine Specialist who co-leads the Sydney Children's Hospital Network CICADA Drug and Alcohol Service alongside Professor Elizabeth Elliott. This service provides a lifespan approach for children who have been impacted by prenatal alcohol or other drugs, are exposed to substance use within the family or have alcohol or other drug use as adolescents. Dr Milne has been instrumental in the development and expansion of this service, including the newly appointed Aboriginal Care Navigator position. Dr Milne is passionate about providing holistic health care to improve the health and wellbeing of children and adolescents, particularly those who have experienced adversity.

JOSHUA TOOMEY

CICADA Drug & Alcohol Service

Joshua Toomey is a proud Wiradjuri man from Dubbo, and Aboriginal Care Navigator with the Care and Intervention for children and adolescents affected by drugs and Alcohol (CICADA). With a background in adult AOD in the community, Josh is driven to challenge barriers by utilising his lived experience to give back to the community, creating opportunities for Indigenous young people and families to access care safely.

LAUREN JONES

CICADA Drug & Alcohol Service

Lauren Jones is a proud Bundjalung woman from Redfern, who is an Aboriginal Care Navigator at Care and Intervention for children and adolescents affected by drugs and Alcohol (CICADA). She received her BA in Criminology and Criminal Justice from the University of New South Wales in 2023, and is led by her lived experience to empower community by creating safe pathways to access care.

CASEY NADEN

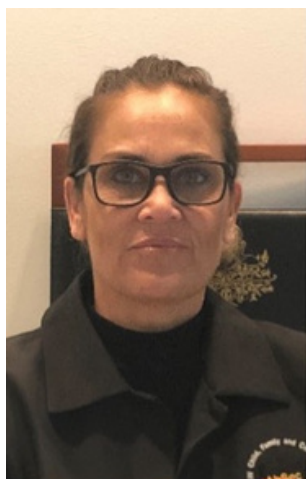
Orange Aboriginal Medical Service



Casey Naden, is a proud Wiradjuri Women from Orange NSW, her people are from the Gilgandra and Peak Hill area. She has worked in mental health for 13 years and more specific 7 years in Suicide Prevention. She is a strong advocate for the people she works with and passionate about helping close the gap within her culture through improving the lives of those around her and creating sustainable positive change. Casey wants to break down the negative connotation of mental health and suicide and improve the impact it has on rural and remote communities by sharing her knowledge and skills.

KERRY SMITH

Chief Policy Officer, Mental Health Branch



Kerry is a proud Wiradjuri woman born and raised in Condobolin in Western NSW, she has a wealth of experience in Aboriginal Affairs with over 20 years working in the public sector to improve outcomes for Aboriginal people, working in policy analysis and senior project positions. Kerry is the Principal Policy Officer for Aboriginal Mental Health, NSW Ministry of Health.

NETWORKING EVENT ENTERTAINMENT

MADDI LYN MUSIC



MADDILYN Is an Aboriginal singer/songwriter hailing from Campbelltown, NSW. Singing since the age of six, her first performance of her career came at the Camden Valley Country Music Club. With her heart set on performing and a deep passion for country music. Maddi Lyn has many notable successes.

An avid member of the Macarthur Country music club. Her talent is recognised state wide for winning numerous country music competitions including NSW Country Music Regional Awards at Forbes, Illabo, South Coast, Dubbo, and Bluebell. She is also the local winner of the Macarthur Country Music Awards. In 2015 Maddi WON THE AUSTRALIAN COUNTRY TALENT SEEKERS QUEST, Where she was the YOUNGEST AND LAST of the competition.

Selected as a promising up and coming artist in 2015 she participated in the Young, Black and Deadly program. This saw the RELEASE OF DEBUT SINGLE 'PROMISE'. The track enjoyed radio play, nationally and internationally. It is currently available on iTunes as well as streaming on Spotify. It was through this program Maddi had the opportunity to work with Leah Flanagan, Uncle Vic Sims, Luke Peacock and perform at YABURN in consecutive years.

Maddi Lyn is GRADUATE OF THE ACADEMY OF COUNTRY MUSIC IN TAMWORTH. It is here she introduced the guitar into her stage performances. Maddi has since gone on to open for Casey Donovan. As well as performing at BEACH Festival as part of the commonwealth Games on the Gold Coast, As well and performing the National Anthem in English and her Native Language Dharug at the NRL Indigenous round 2018, 2019 And the EKKA Royal Agricultural Show in Brisbane. With her eyes on performing at the Tamworth Country Music Festival, Maddi is excited to bring her music to new audiences across the country & Internationally.

GALA EVENT ENTERTAINMENT

THE MIGHTY YAK



The Mighty Yak is a highly versatile live cover band with a significant presence in Southern NSW. Over the past 15 years, the band has established itself in the Riverina region and has showcased talent at numerous corporate functions across major cities such as Sydney, Melbourne, and Canberra. The band is particularly renowned for their adaptability to diverse performance requirements.

Fronted by Mark Atkinson, who gained initial recognition through his appearance on Australian Idol, reaching the top 100, the band has maintained a consistent presence in the music scene. Mark, along with The Mighty Yak, has graced various festivals including Tumbafest and Flow Festival. With a strong connection to his Wiradjuri heritage, Mark has actively participated in cultural events and NAIDOC festivals alongside The Mighty Yak.

Comprising a quartet of talented musicians adept in guitar, bass, drums, and vocals, The Mighty Yak offers versatility across a broad spectrum of musical genres.

FORUM SPONSORS

ABORIGINAL HEALTH AND MEDICAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

Networking Event Sponsor



AH&MRC
Aboriginal Health & Medical
Research Council of NSW

The Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council is the Peak body for Aboriginal Community Controlled Health and related services in NSW. The AH&MRC is governed by a Board of Directors who are Aboriginal people elected by our members on a regional basis. We represent, support and advocate for our members and their communities on Aboriginal health at state and national levels.

The AH&MRC structure facilitates continuous community participation through the process of Aboriginal community control. This also enables the Aboriginal Community to influence policy development and health planning at all levels. This structure embodies the ongoing consultative and representative mechanisms essential for the gathering of views from the communities AH&MRC serves and to which it is accountable.

AH&MRC is also a proud partner of the 2024 Aboriginal Mental Health and Wellbeing Workforce Forum.

CHARLES STURT UNIVERSITY

Djirruwang 30 Year Anniversary Gala Event Sponsor



**Charles Sturt
University**



First Nations

Charles Sturt University is Australia's leading regional university, advancing the careers of students, inspiring research excellence and driving regional outcomes with global impact.

We are proud of our history in the regions and work together with our students, industry partners, government, and communities for the public good. We are a leader in education for graduate outcomes and employment, world-class campuses, and online delivery.

Charles Sturt is a leading University in First Nations enrolments and graduate outcomes, with a firm commitment to expanding collaboration with First Nations students, communities and the community controlled sector.

JUSTICE HEALTH AND FORENSIC MENTAL HEALTH NETWORK

MC Sponsor



**Justice Health and
Forensic Mental Health Network**

Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network (Justice Health NSW) is an essential part of the broader NSW public health system.

We provide health care to adults and young people involved in forensic mental health and criminal justice systems. We serve patients with complex health needs in community, inpatient, and custodial settings.

We have the opportunity to improve the lives of those who need it most and have limited contact with mainstream health services in the community.

IAHA

Keynote Speaker Sponsor, Delegate Tote Bag Sponsor, and Exhibitor



Indigenous Allied Health Australia (IAHA) is a national Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community-controlled organisation. Membership is free for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce, with tailored member benefits including access to professional development, cultural and social wellbeing activities, scholarships and bursaries, networking and mentoring, and leadership development, at all stages of the career journey.

WESTERN PRIMARY HEALTH NETWORK

Keynote Speaker Sponsor and Exhibitor



The Western NSW Primary Health Network (WNSW PHN), is one of 31 Primary Health Networks across Australia, established to support frontline health services and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of primary health care.

WNSW PHN's focus is on patients who are at risk of poor health outcomes and on working to improve the coordination of their care, so they receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

GAYAA DHUWI (PROUD SPIRIT) AUSTRALIA

Exhibitor



Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Leadership in Social and Emotional Wellbeing, Mental Health and Suicide Prevention

Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia is the national peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional wellbeing, mental health, and suicide prevention. As a community controlled organisation, we are governed and controlled by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander experts and peak bodies, working in these areas to promote collective excellence in mental health care.

WELLMOB

Exhibitor



The [WellMob](#) website is an online library of over 400 videos, apps, podcasts and other websites on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander social and emotional wellbeing (SEWB). It's been designed for health and wellbeing workforce use online SEWB resources with our diverse mob. It is led by Indigenous staff out of University of Sydney.

MANNA INSTITUTE

Lanyard Sponsor

manna
INSTITUTE

Mental health research and
training for regional Australia

The Manna Institute is a virtual institute of leading researchers working with industry and community partners to improve mental health and wellbeing in rural, regional and remote Australia.

It is funded by a Commonwealth grant under the Regional Research Collaboration program and aims to foster meaningful research, professional workforce development, and the translation of research findings into practical, place-based programs. The institute's seven partner universities include Charles Sturt University, Central Queensland University, Federation University, Southern Cross University, the University of Southern Queensland, the University of Sunshine Coast and lead institution the University of New England.