

2025 NSW ABORIGINAL SUICIDE PREVENTION FORUM



11th and 12th June 2025
Dockside, Cockle Bay Wharf, Sydney

WELCOME TO SYDNEY!

2025 NSW Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Forum

The NSW Ministry of Health in partnership with the Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council will be hosting the NSW Aboriginal Suicide Prevention Forum on 11 - 12 June 2025.

The Forum will feature a range of sessions including:

- Guest speakers discussing their work in suicide prevention
- Understanding data available to support suicide prevention
- Information on Closing the Gap initiatives
- Showcasing current initiatives in Aboriginal Suicide Prevention

The Forum is designed to support those working in Aboriginal mental health and suicide prevention by identifying best practice models of care for Aboriginal people.

The Forum aims to bring together those involved in Aboriginal mental health and suicide prevention across NSW, fostering local and statewide connections and offering a platform to share and exchange information. We invite attendees from NSW Health, Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisations (ACCHOs), Primary Health Networks, Community Managed Organisations, Non-Government Organisations and key stakeholders.

The suicide rate among Aboriginal communities is more than twice that of non-Indigenous Australians and is the leading cause of death for Indigenous Australians aged 15–44. For more detailed statistics, refer to the Intentional self-harm deaths (Suicide) in Australia.

WEDNESDAY 11TH JUNE 2025

Dockside, Cockle Bay Wharf

8:00am	Registrations Open <i>Outdoor Terrace</i>
8:15am	Smoking Ceremony <i>Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council</i>
9:00am	Master of Ceremonies <i>Naomi Moran</i>
9:10am	Welcome to Country <i>Metropolitan Local Aboriginal Land Council</i>
9:30am	Opening Address <i>The Hon Rose Jackson MLC, Minister for Water, Minister for Housing, Minister for Homelessness, Minister for Mental Health, Minister for Youth, Minister for the North Coast</i> <i>Susan Pearce AM, Secretary, NSW Health</i> <i>Nicole Turner, Chief Executive Officer, Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council</i>
10:00am	Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia: The National Peak Body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional Wellbeing, Mental Health, and Suicide Prevention. <i>Rachel Fishlock, Chief Executive Officer, Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia</i>
10:30am	MORNING TEA
10:45am	Our Journey in Suicide Prevention <i>Sally Lee, Director Priority Programs Team, Ministry of Health</i>
11:15am	Towards Zero Suicides: Aboriginal-Led Safe Haven <i>Thomas Franks, Aboriginal Suicide Prevention and After Care Service Manager, Central Coast Local Health District</i>
11:45am	Culture Care Connect <i>Lachlan Madden, Member Engagement Coordinator, Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council and Orange Aboriginal Medical Service</i> <i>Cazim Kadic</i>
12:15pm	LUNCH
1:00pm	Panel - Perspectives on Suicide Prevention and Postvention Support

1:45pm	First Nations Co. Workshop <i>Marni Tuala, Chief Executive Officer, First Nations Co.</i> <i>Kulkarawa Barambah Meeanjinu, Senior Associate, First Nations Co.</i>
2:45pm	AFTERNOON TEA
3:00pm	First Nations Co. Workshop <i>Marni Tuala, Chief Executive Officer, First Nations Co.</i> <i>Kulkarawa Barambah Meeanjinu, Senior Associate, First Nations Co.</i>
4:00pm	Data Initiatives to Support Suicide Prevention and Response - CLOSED SESSION - *requires signed confidentiality deed <i>InforMH, System Information and Analytics Branch, Ministry of Health</i>
4:30pm	Wrap Up and Close

THURSDAY 12TH JUNE 2025

Dockside, Cockle Bay Wharf

8:30am	Registrations Open <i>Outdoor Terrace</i>
9:00am	Welcome Back, Recap of Day 1 and Overview of Day 2 <i>Naomi Moran</i>
9:15am	Opening Address <i>Jamie Newman, Chief Executive Officer, Orange Aboriginal Medical Service</i>
9:30am	Thirrili - Indigenous Suicide Postvention Service <i>Tanya Robinson, Director of Service Delivery, Thirrili</i> <i>David Hodges, NSW Indigenous Outreach Worker, Thirrili</i>
10:00am	The Role Online SEWB Tools Can Play in Suicide Prevention <i>David Edwards, Director, WellMob Website Project</i> <i>Sharnie Roberts, Training & Development, WellMob Website Project</i>
10:30am	MORNING TEA

11:00am	NSW Health, Mental Health Branch <i>Matthew Trindall, Director, Aboriginal Mental Health</i>
11:15am	13YARN: Codesigning for Success <i>Marjorie Anderson, Head of Indigenous Affairs, 13Yarn/Lifeline Australia</i>
11:45am	<i>Professor Maree Toombs, Deputy Dean Indigenous, University of New South Wales</i>
12:30pm	LUNCH
1:15pm	Fireside Chat <i>Greg Inglis, CEO, Goanna Academy</i>
2:00pm	Building on Aboriginal Communities Resilience Initiative <i>Alana Rossmann, Bubilyii Program Coordinator, Social and Emotional Wellbeing Team, Tharawal Aboriginal Corporation</i>
2:30pm	Workshop and Next Steps <i>Mental Health Branch Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council</i>
3:00pm	AFTERNOON TEA
3:15pm	Workshop and Next Steps <i>Mental Health Branch Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council</i>
4:15pm	Wrap Up and Close

GUEST SPEAKERS

MC Naomi Moran



Ms Naomi Moran is a Nyangbal and Arakwal woman from the Bundjalung nation in northern NSW and Dunghutti woman from the mid-north coast of NSW, and her leadership as a First Nations woman is centred on her strong grassroots connections to Aboriginal people and communities across NSW.

Prior to her appointment as Commissioner, she was CEO of Australia's only independent, printed national Indigenous newspaper, the Koori Mail with her career in Indigenous Media spanning over 27 years, including print, radio and television.

She was previously Co-Chair of First Nations Media Australia - the peak body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander media - and currently serves as a member of the Federal Government's First Nations Digital Inclusion Advisory Group.

In 2024, Ms Moran was appointed to the national NAIDOC committee, and has served on the boards of two peak creative arts and performing arts organisations in Northern NSW, NORPA and Arts Northern Rivers.

Naomi is a prominent voice in Indigenous media and maintains a deep commitment to sharing the stories and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples from across the nation.

Naomi has worked tirelessly to support and strengthen Indigenous community-controlled sectors through the self-determination of Australia's First Nations people to govern their own affairs and lead and deliver programs, projects and community initiatives by community, for community.

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.

RACHEL FISHLOCK

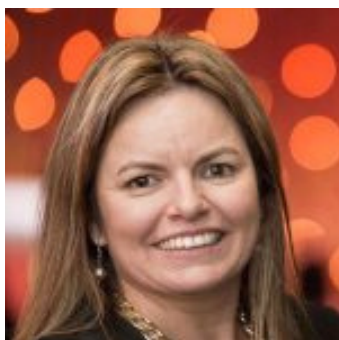
CEO, Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia



Rachel is a proud descendant of the Yuin Nation and is the CEO of Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia, the peak peak leadership body for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Social and Emotional well-being, mental health, and suicide prevention. With over a decade of experience in the health sector, Rachel made significant contributions in both the optometry industry and the community-controlled sector and has held key roles at The National Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (NACCHO) and Gayaa Dhuwi. Rachel is co-chair of the Wharerātā Hui, a board member of Mental Health Australia and the Capital Health Network, and deputy co-chair of the Social and Emotional Wellbeing Policy Partnership, where she continues advocating for systemic change. She holds a Bachelor of Social Sciences (Social Policy) and a Master of Business Management from the University of Wollongong.

NICOLE TURNER

CEO, Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW



Nicole is a proud Kamilaroi woman and one of the very few qualified Aboriginal Nutritionists throughout Australia. Before becoming a nutritionist, she began her career as an Aboriginal Health Worker and Enrolled Nurse, with now over 25 years of experience in the health sector.

Nicole has held numerous leadership roles throughout her career and currently serves as an Adjunct Professor of Nutrition and Dietetics at the University of Canberra. Her work has been published in several international journals, contributing to the fields of chronic disease prevention and health promotion.

She is now the CEO of the Aboriginal Health and Medical Research Council of NSW and the Chairperson of Indigenous Allied Health Australia, bringing with her more than a decade of executive leadership within the ACCHO sector.

Nicole has dedicated her career to empowering Aboriginal communities with the education and knowledge needed to make informed decisions about their health and wellbeing.

TANYA ROBINSON

Director of Service Delivery, Thirrili



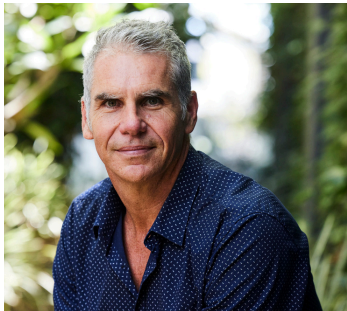
Tanya Robinson is an Accredited Social Worker and Indigenous Leader with experience in executive and senior leadership roles within Community Control organisations and not-for-profit organisations delivering services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Tanya has experience in community engagement, family support, early years, mental health, social emotional wellbeing, case management, counselling, supervision, leadership and management.

Tanya is known for her strong work ethic and passion for developing and growing an improved workforce and services to deliver quality service.

Tanya is both Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander and has connections to Western Yalanji and Butchulla through her mother's peoples and Wagadagam through her father's peoples. As well as Mapoon, Cape York connections through her father peoples. Tanya is very driven and passionate about quality service delivery for her people and contributing to improving life outcomes for her people. Tanya deeply loves her people and is driven to empower her people to live full lives like all Australians.

DAVID EDWARDS

Director, WellMob



David Edwards is a Worimi man who grew up in Turrbal/Jagera country and now lives in the Bundjalung lands of northern NSW. David works under the national e-Mental Health in Practice from University of Sydney's University Centre for Rural Health (UCRH) in Lismore NSW as Director of the WellMob website program that provides a digital library of Aboriginal and Torres Strait specific wellbeing resources. David has a science and Indigenous health promotion background and brings over 30 years of experience in working with community on looking after country, culture and community health and employment. David has contributed to the Dept of Health, Aging and Communities National Digital Mental Health Advisory Group (2022-24) and also represents on other national mental health and wellbeing Indigenous governance groups including Emerging Minds, Beyond Blue, Menzies School of Health Research (AIMhi-Y) and Australian Eating Disorders Research Translation Group (Inside Out). David also supports research work in First Nations health projects that meet community needs in partnership with the University of Sydney's UCRH, Charles Perkins Centre and Poche Centre for Indigenous Health. David is also a volunteer trainer in the Core of Life program delivering interactive workshops to young people about pregnancy and birthing, and co-developed content for the Indigenous fathering text-based information service, #SMS4deadlydads in 2019-2022.

SHARNIE ROBERTS

Training & Development, WellMob



Sharnie Roberts is a Widjabyl Wia-Bul woman from the Bundjalung Nation with bachelor's degree in social sciences working on the WellMob project at University the WellMob project at University Centre for Rural Health in Training and Navigation. Sharnie has a wealth of understanding of social and health determinants that impact the mental health well-being of First Nations people in Australia and is passionate about walking alongside First Nation young people to encourage generational healing through connection/ reconnection to culture & their cultural identity.

MARJORIE ANDERSON

Head of Indigenous Affairs, Lifeline Australia/13Yarn



Marjorie is an Aboriginal woman born and bred in Redfern, her mob is from northern NSW. Before joining Lifeline Australia Marj worked at the Aboriginal Housing Office in a number of roles. Prior to working at the Aboriginal Housing Office, Marj has worked at Sydney Harbour Foreshore Authority, Department of Juvenile Justice, Tourism NSW, The Olympic Coordination Authority and the ABC. Marj has won many awards throughout her career and is the 2025 NSW Aboriginal Woman of the Year. Marj is passionate about building resilient sustainable communities.

PROFESSOR MAREE TOOMBS

Deputy Dean Indigenous, University of New South Wales



As a proud Aboriginal researcher and academic, Professor Toombs currently serves as Deputy Dean Indigenous at The University of New South Wales. Professor Toombs' career has been dedicated to improving health outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples through research, leadership, and community engagement.

Professor Toombs' research focuses on developing culturally appropriate healthcare models, particularly in mental health and suicide prevention. She has led numerous groundbreaking projects, including the development of Indigenous-specific suicide intervention programs (I-ASIST) and the cultural validation of mental health diagnostic tools. Recently, her work has expanded into genomic medicine and respiratory health, always maintaining a strong emphasis on community-led research design.

Beyond the research, Professor Toombs is passionate about mentoring the next generation of Indigenous researchers and healthcare professionals. She is dedicated to advocating for Indigenous-led solutions in healthcare, believing that lasting positive change comes through genuine partnership with our communities and respect for Indigenous knowledge systems

JAMIE NEWMAN

CEO, Orange Aboriginal Medical Service



I am proud Wiradjuri descendent, born and raised in Condobolin and gladly been a resident of Orange for approx. 39 years, I call this place home. I am not perfect and will never profess to be. I am however a determined individual that fights hard for what my people and community need.

Some things you may or may not know about me;

- I am the current Chairperson of the Aboriginal Health & Medical Research Council of NSW.
- Newly appointed to NACCHO Board of Directors.
- Founding Board member of the Western Primary Health Network.
- Ex Council Member of Charles Sturt University.
- Current Chairperson of Orange Local Aboriginal Lands Council

I have been the CEO of Orange Aboriginal Medical Service for approximately 20 years and led this organisation from an initial team of 7 staff to now a multi-diversified service provider with a current staffing level of 140.

This amazing achievement has been the result of multiple people over many years working for our people in community and wanting what's best for them, my job is to lead them.

I don't accept the term 'I am passionate about my people' unless its practised and evidenced by visible change. We are accomplishing this at OAMS and I believe our ethos contributes to this; "illness and disease doesn't discriminate and neither should we". This has been our driver for 20 years!

"Being Aboriginal is a reason to succeed, rather than an excuse not to"

SUSAN PEARCE AM

B App Sci (Nursing), Dip Law, Grad Dip Legal Practice, Secretary NSW Health



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 142,000 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 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.

MARNI TUALA

*Chief Executive Officer, First Nations Co.
Bundjalung, Gumbaynggirr & Gomeri*



Marni is a proud Bundjalung woman and CEO of First Nations Co., bringing decades of leadership across governance, policy, and clinical health. A former President of CATSINaM and a Registered Midwife, Marni has worked across government and Aboriginal Community Controlled sectors with a clear focus on culturally informed and outcomes-focused reform. She is unwavering in her commitment to eradicating racism, strengthening cultural safety in health and education systems, and driving systemic change for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples.

Raised in Northern NSW, Marni continues to lead both on-country and nationally, supporting young people through culturally grounded employment, mentoring, and community connection. Her leadership centres on creating spaces of healing, truth-telling, and empowerment. As CEO of First Nations Co., Marni is driving meaningful change with integrity, compassion, and deep cultural knowledge.

KULKARAWA BARAMBAH MEEANJINU

Senior Associate, First Nations Co.

Turrbal, Gubbi Gubbi, with connections to Wakka Wakka, Kamilaroi & Birri Gubba



Kulkarawa is a Turrbal and Gubbi Gubbi woman with ancestral ties to Meanjin (Brisbane). She holds a Bachelor of Business Management (International Business) from the University of Queensland and brings a strong consulting background from her time at Ernst & Young. With a deep understanding of Indigenous economic development, she supports community-led solutions that advance self-determination and long-term prosperity.

Kulkarawa's work spans economic strategy, governance, and policy reform, always grounded in cultural integrity and community empowerment. At First Nations Co., she plays a pivotal role in driving projects that foster equitable opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities across Australia.

GREG INGLIS

CEO, Goanna Academy



Greg Inglis has cemented his place as one of Rugby League's greats, having achieved every major accolade in the sport: three-time Club Premiership winner, Clive Churchill Medallist, Rookie of the Year, and Representative Player of the Year. He has proudly represented Queensland, Australia, and most meaningfully, his heritage as Captain of the Indigenous All Stars.

Beyond his illustrious career on the field, Greg has become a passionate advocate and mentor for young Australians. His transition into this next chapter of his life is marked by a deep commitment to helping others—particularly those facing mental health challenges—achieve positive outcomes and break the stigma of what he calls "the silent illness."

Greg's stature and experience resonate with a broad audience, from young Australians and regional communities to corporate high-performance teams. His unique ability to connect and inspire stems from a willingness to share his personal journey and promote balance between work, school, and everyday life. Whether speaking to students, communities, or business leaders, Greg's message is one of resilience, self-awareness, and the pursuit of a meaningful life.

As the founder of the Goanna Academy—Australia's first Indigenous-owned mental health organisation—Greg has taken his advocacy a step further, dedicating himself to transforming lives. Through the Academy, he empowers young people, adults, and Indigenous communities to develop mental resilience, challenge stigma, and support one another in times of need.

A proud Dunghutti Gamilaraay man, Greg's upbringing in Macksville in the Nambucca Valle, was shaped by both triumph and adversity. Supported by family and community, he learned the value of resilience and the importance of staying true to one's roots. His passion for mental health advocacy stems from his own lived experience, and he speaks openly about his struggles, encouraging others to do the same.

Greg's mission is clear: to guide the next generation, foster empathy, and empower young people to become champions for mental health within their communities. Through his work with the Goanna Academy, he is creating a legacy that extends far beyond the playing field—one that inspires hope, connection, and a brighter future for all.

AH&MRC

Exhibitor



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 is accountable.

GAYAA DHUWI (PROUD SPIRIT) AUSTRALIA

Exhibitor



Gayaa Dhuwi (Proud Spirit) Australia

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.

THIRRILI

Exhibitor



THIRRILI

Thirrili is a proud Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander organisation that is led by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing, being and doing. As an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Community Controlled Organisation, we recognise the strengths of our communities and our strong responsibility to support communities in the aftermath of suicide or unexpected fatal incidents. We uphold protective boundaries for individuals, families and communities that allow self-determination in their ways of bereavement and healing.

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.

13YARN

Exhibitor



13YARN is the first national service of its kind for Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander people in crisis. We offer a confidential one-on-one over the phone yarning opportunity and support with a trained Lifeline Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Crisis Supporter for mob who are feeling overwhelmed or having difficulty coping. No judgement and no shame