

*Aboriginal health in Aboriginal hands*



**ANNUAL REPORT 2016**





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## CHIEF EXECUTIVE INTRODUCTION

Over the past year we have been working on achieving the strategic goals set us by the board to deliver expanded and enhanced services through the Apunipima Way – a comprehensive primary health care service that is community driven and community led. You will see throughout this report that we are well on the way to achieving that: we opened a new primary health care facility in Aurukun, are set to open a new primary health care facility in Napranum early in the next financial year and building is set to begin on a new primary health care facility in Coen.

I am also delighted to report that Apunipima has significantly increased access to health services in Cape York, with 81% of the people in the 11 Cape communities we serve, accessing Apunipima services this year.

With the increased access comes improved wellness with our performance against National Key Performance Indicators showing us meeting and exceeding targets in most areas. You will also see how we are continuing our work to Close the Gap.

Smoking continues to be of great concern to us with 67% of pregnant mothers still smoking and 54% of the population aged 15 years and above still smoking. We recognise the impact that this can have on long term health and as recipients of a tackling smoking grant are in the process of developing a comprehensive set of programs to tackle this issue.

A key focus this year has been developing partnerships with corporate and philanthropic partners, indeed, our 21st Anniversary Celebration was fully sponsored by some of those partners.

While still in the early stages, we expect some of these partnerships to come to fruition over the next twelve months which will mean we have an exciting future ahead of us with the collaborative partnerships resulting in all organisations sharing their extensive experience and expertise for the betterment of all who receive their services.

Our key partnership however, continues to be the communities we serve and we have been working very closely with the elected members of those communities in order to influence whole system reforms to deliver the right primary health care services with the funding to match.

Over the next year, our focus will be on continuing to expand our footprint in Cape York and develop the services we have to deliver wellness improvement through the Apunipima Way.

Cleveland Fagan, Chief Executive

## THIS YEAR WE HAVE SEEN...



AN INCREASE OF

# 3,000



CLIENTS WHO HAVE ACCESSED OUR SERVICES  
**MORE THAN THREE TIMES** OVER THE LAST 12 MONTHS

# 81%

of the people in the 11 Cape communities we serve accessed our services this year

**Almost half** of all children aged 0 – 4 years receiving a health check in the past 12 months



# 87

INDIVIDUALS RECEIVED CATARACT SURGERY THIS YEAR



# 80%

OF CHILDREN IMMUNISED



AN AVERAGE OF

# 48

CLIENTS PER DAY ATTEND OUR

## AURUKUN

PRIMARY HEALTH CARE CENTRE

# 32%

of the client population tested for cardio vascular risk factors





## CHAIRMAN'S FOREWORD

**W**elcome to the Annual Report for 2015-16. This year Apunipima turned 21 years and at a gala event, recognised the commitment and faith shown by its original members and past chairmen as we celebrated our coming of age.

With 200 people at the fully sponsored event, the night showcased the hard work and efforts shown by staff, and the overall achievements of Apunipima as we celebrate 21 years.

Apunipima's original members were entered into the Apunipima Hall of Fame which is a special recognition award for the people of Cape York who have made a significant contribution to improving wellness outcomes for the people of Cape York.

In 1994 at Pajinka Lodge, near Injinoo at the tip of Cape York, elders and traditional owners from the 17 Cape York communities and others came together at a Land and Health summit to demand action on worsening health outcomes for our people. As a result Apunipima was conceived. In November of that same year, Apunipima was incorporated as an advocacy organisation with a membership of 34. Over the years our membership has grown but sadly only 15 of those 34 original members are still with us today and were guests of honour at the event.

It is incredible to see what we have achieved over the years as according to Apunipima's first ever funding submission produced in September 1994:

- There was a chronic shortage of medical professionals and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers;
- Life expectancy was 20 years less than the Queensland average;
- There had been no improvement in birthweights over the last 20 years; and
- Infant mortality rates were twice as high as the rates for Queensland

Fast forward to today and:

- Apunipima has a staff of over 150 featuring doctors and specialists, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers, nurses/midwives and allied health professionals, all delivering services in Cape York communities. Many of whom live and work in those communities.
- The gap in life expectancy has fallen to 10 years\*
- The number of low birthweights in the Cape has fallen to 15% compared to a national average of 13%\*\*
- The infant mortality rate declined 46% between 2001 and 2010 and continues to do so\*
- We have community controlled health centres in two communities – Aurukun and Mossman Gorge.



**WHAT THE PEOPLE AT PAJINKA DID WAS VERY BRAVE, THEY RECOGNISED THAT MAINSTREAM SERVICES WERE NOT WORKING FOR THEM AND DECIDED TO TAKE MATTERS INTO THEIR OWN HANDS AND ESTABLISH APUNIPIMA.**

21 years later I am proud to say that despite there still being a long way to go, health outcomes continue to improve and we can and are closing the gap. Despite significant barriers and challenges, we will continue to strive to meet the vision that was born from Pajinka.

With our Strategic Plan closely aligned to that vision, we are continuing to see good progress against each of our five strategic goals. Health outcomes against national key performance indicators continue to improve; building work is set to begin on a new health facility in Coen early in the next financial year with a new facility in Napranum opening for business; membership of Apunipima has increased; the auditors have declared an unqualified audit; and we continue to be sought after for comment, opinion and presentations at local, regional, national and international levels.

Over the next year we are determined to meet our commitment to community to deliver expanded and enhanced services that are community driven and community led that will lead to community controlled health services delivering wellness improvement across the Cape.

Thomas Hudson, Chairman





# CLOSING THE GAP IN CAPE YORK

It is 10 years since the Close the Gap campaign was first launched to work out how best to address the challenges of closing the health, employment and education gap for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. Apunipima, in its 21st Year is has always been and continues to be committed to addressing these major physical and social and emotional challenges and to generating health parity for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people of Cape York.



## People living in remote communities have worse health outcomes than those living in rural, regional and metropolitan areas

### WHAT APUNIPIMA IS DOING

Apunipima services around 7,500 people living 11 remote and very remote Cape York communities. In 2015-16 over 80% of Cape York's Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander population have accessed Apunipima's services.

Apunipima runs the health service in Mossman Gorge, has opened a new health care facility Aurukun, will shortly be opening a new facility in Napranum and is about to start building a new facility in Coen.

There is incontrovertible evidence that community driven, community led, culturally appropriate primary health care is key to improving health outcomes amongst Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people.

By increasing the number of facilities in our communities we improve access to healthcare and health literacy, employ local people and build community and individual capacity.

## Halve the gap in mortality rates for Indigenous children under five within a decade (by 2018)

### WHAT APUNIPIMA IS DOING

Apunipima's Maternal and Child Health team's award winning Baby One Program™ is an Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker led program designed to support women, babies and families from pregnancy until the bub is 1000 days old (nearly three).

In 2015-16,

- **85 per cent** of pregnant women and their families in Cape York were signed up to the Baby One Program™
- **45 per cent** accessed antenatal care before the thirteenth week of their pregnancy
- **100 per cent** received five or more antenatal visits during pregnancy with an average of more than 13 antenatal contacts per pregnancy
- **83 per cent** of babies were born within normal weight range
- **91 per cent** of Cape York babies were born after 36 weeks gestation
- **80 per cent** of children under five were recorded as fully immunised (above the national average).

## Close the gap in life expectancy between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians within a generation (by 2031).

### WHAT APUNIPIMA IS DOING

As chronic disease accounts for three quarters of the mortality gap Apunipima is dedicated to preventing and managing chronic disease on Cape York.

Diabetes and chronic kidney disease accounts for the greatest burden of chronic disease amongst our patients.

We employ three Diabetes Nurse Educators, and a Care Coordination team that helps chronic disease patients navigate the health system and access specialist care.

Apunipima has recently received a substantial grant to deliver a comprehensive Tackling Smoking education and cessation program which we are set to launch in the autumn.

Recognising that mental health is as important as physical health Apunipima has this year developed a Social and Emotional Wellbeing Strategy and has appointed a team to deliver a range of programs designed to improve people's capacity and resilience.

Programs include Healthy Relationship training, working with prisoners at Lotus Glen, and Community Support Groups which provide social and emotional wellbeing education and support.

Apunipima's Maternal and Child Health team includes a social worker and we also have a Partners in Recovery Coordinator who helps people who have been in mental health facilities reintegrate into community.

Apunipima provides a GP in each of the 11 communities in which we work.

We are actively working to reduce smoking and improve nutrition, (through a range of activities including working closely with community stores, drafting healthy eating guidelines and community cooking demonstrations and classes) both key factors in achieving good health.



## Health Workforce

### WHAT APUNIPIMA IS DOING

The Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander workforce is integral to ensuring the health system addresses the needs of Indigenous Australians. They can improve patient care, access to services and ensure culturally appropriate services.

Apunipima has a workforce of around 160 employees, with 52% identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander.

Currently around 25% are community based (both living and working in community).

Apunipima's strategic objective is to build capacity in Cape York communities, with a stated target of 50% of workforce being community based by 2018 (and a further increase to 80% community based by 2023).

Apunipima employs 36 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers in Queensland, making it one of the largest non-government employers of health workers in the state.

We ensure our Health Workers are provided with appropriate qualifications (with 13 health workers currently enrolled in either Cert III or Cert IV PHC Practice), and are supported to pursue Australian Health Practitioners Regulation Agency registration as Health Practitioners should they choose to do so.

63% of our current Health Workers are community based, increasing community employment numbers and helping to address the social determinants of health.



# OUR COMMUNITIES



## AURUKUN

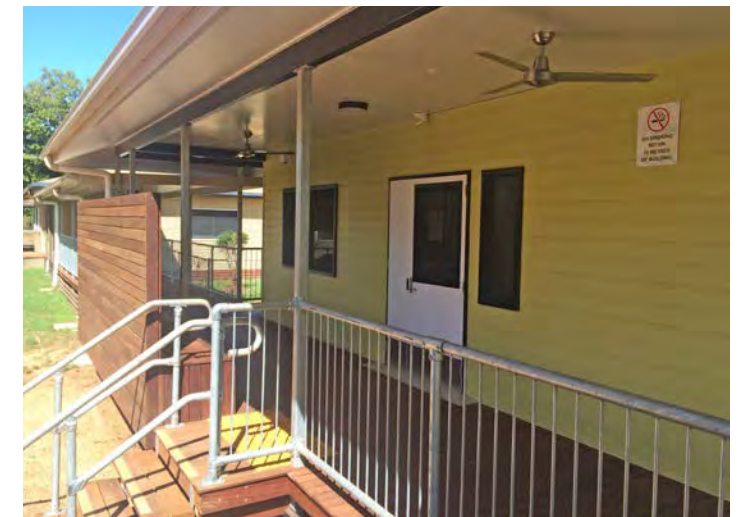
### New facility opens in Aurukun

May saw Apunipima open its first Primary Health Care Centre funded through the Australian Governments Health and Hospitals Fund.

The new centre in Aurukun is Apunipima's third independent, community driven, community led facility on Cape York, joining Mossman Gorge Primary Health Care Centre and Atharpuch Mums n Bubs Family Health Centre in Kowanyama.

The facility in Aurukun, as yet to be named by community, offers culturally appropriate primary health care services including doctors, nurses, diabetes education, as well as health promotion, men's health, maternal and child health, nutrition and social and emotional well-being services. The Hospital and Health funding enabled Apunipima to build a brand new Primary Health Care Centre on the existing health precinct in Aurukun along with staff accommodation to support the most effective service delivery.

Staff at the new centre will work closely with Aurukun's Health Action Team and community leaders to ensure services reflect and respond to the health needs of the local community.



## COEN

### Apunipima expanding services in Coen

Mums to be in Coen now receive more support as Apunipima has expanded its maternal health service.

Mums in Coen now receive the full benefit of Apunipima's award winning Baby One Program™ as in addition to the support provided by community based Maternal and Child Health Worker Kirsten Kulka, there is also a Midwife/Child Health Nurse too.

The Baby One Program™, named for the youngest child in a family, is centred on the baby and family. It is health worker led, meaning families get consistent care throughout their pregnancy up to bub's second birthday within a home visiting model with most interactions take place away from a clinical setting. This means mum, bub and family are much more

comfortable and receptive. Ten years ago the Australian Bureau of Statistics were reporting less than a quarter of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander mums were still breastfeeding at six months whereas now in Cape York, at least 50% of mums are still breastfeeding at six months.

Rachel Sargeant, head of Apunipima's Family Health Services said, "Evidence shows it is vital to good long term health that children get the best start they can so we are delighted to be able to offer this expanded service for mums and mums to be in Coen.

"We will now be able to offer them the full package when it comes to our Baby One Program™ – care and support from conception to 1000 days."







## HOPEVALE

### Walking the talk in Hopevale

**A**s a health worker in Hope Vale, Georgia Gibson believes in practicing what she preaches. In educating Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people about the importance of exercise and good nutrition, Ms Gibson was so busy helping others that her own health took a back seat.

After seeing a photo of herself at Christmas in 2014 where she tipped the scales at 100kg, Ms Gibson decided she had to “walk the talk”. She became a participant in Apunipima’s 12-week lifestyle program, Beat IT, in March and has continued on with success.

In Hopevale, Apunipima worked with Hopevale Aboriginal Shire Council and PCYC to deliver Beat IT, a lifestyle modification program developed by the Australian Diabetes Council. The program increases knowledge on eating healthy and the importance of staying active to reduce the risk of chronic disease. The Beat IT team includes qualified trainers, doctors, diabetes educators and a dietitian. After successfully completing the program, Ms Gibson has lost more than 20kg and continues to lose weight with her goal to lose another 5kg before Christmas.

“I walked and walked and walked because there’s no access to gyms in Hopevale,” Ms Gibson said. “I followed a meal plan from Apunipima’s dietitian and started cooking my own meals. “I’d spend \$50 on fruit and veg and that would last me a week and I’d buy lean meat from the butcher’s in town.

“I thought, ‘if I’m going to be telling people that they need to choose healthy foods and exercise then I had better do it myself’,” she said. “I am a big believer in leading by example.”

By exercising daily and eating fresh fruit and vegetables, Ms Gibson is setting a trend for her mob in the Cape.

Public Health Registrar Dr Alister Keyser said Ms Gibson is an inspiration not only to her peers but health professionals everywhere.

“The Beat IT program within our organisation is about healthy lifestyle choices and Georgia is living proof that making healthy food choices combined with exercise works,” Dr Keyser said.

“She is helping to Close the Gap in our Indigenous communities and is a role model for her people and health professionals.”



## KOWANYAMA

### Sharing stories and seeding change in Kowanyama

**T**he message to women to prevent the cycle of chronic disease is being heard loud and clear in Kowanyama when a women’s group gathering attracted more than 20 women earlier in the year.

The event at Atharpuch Mums and Bubs Family Health Centre was aimed at women of all ages and even attracted some as young as 16 yrs. Apunipima’s diabetes nurse educator Cath Dowey, along with Act4Kids, Queensland Health and the Royal Flying Doctor Service, held a range of unusual activities to focus on how healthy eating, physical activity and wellbeing are key in the prevention of chronic disease.

Ms Dowey said women engaged well at the session and messages of making healthy choices was a key topic in conversation.

“We played pass the parcel and as each parcel was unwrapped, a question about health was asked. This was a very different way of sharing knowledge and understanding of the issues that can impact health i.e. a can of soft drink has nine teaspoons of sugar and that a healthy option is to drink water, not soft drink, to help reduce the risk of chronic disease.”

“We shared some of the facts from the National Diabetes Strategy for Australia on how Aboriginal



and Torres Strait Islander children are six times more likely to develop Type 2 diabetes than non-indigenous children and that those statistics seem to keep increasing in Cape York,” Ms Dowey said.

One young woman who attended the session shared her story and told of how her parents have changed their eating habits since her father was diagnosed with Type 2 diabetes and her mother pre-diabetes. The parents understood the increased risk of their children developing diabetes and changed their lifestyle habits.

“Being able to make the sessions engaging for women of all ages is fantastic,” Ms Dowey said. “By making it so interactive, people of all ages are sharing stories about health and physical activity and really getting the messages home.

## LAURA

### Apunipima and Ang Gnarra join forces with Australian Army to Celebrate NAIDOC

**A**lmost 20% of all Laura residents received a health check during NAIDOC Week as Apunipima, Ang Gnarra and the Australian Army joined forces to highlight the importance of good health during this celebration week. With the Australian Army in town delivering the ‘Army Aboriginal Community Assistance Program’ Apunipima’s Dr Louise Craig worked with the Army medics to carry out the health checks at Ang Gnarra, with a healthy lunch for all participants provided. The screening day was well received by the community with 17 health checks completed on the day. Such was the success of the screening that after hearing about it, two people were even waiting





## MAPOON

### Think Tank workshop ideas taken to Mapoon

Following a national Think Tank held in Cairns early last year, shared learnings were taken back to Mapoon to establish a support group for community women run by community women to empower them with life skills.

The Think Tank workshop was held in Cairns to develop a culturally appropriate support group model for women in remote communities. The establishment of the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women's support groups provide a safe place where women can share their aspirations and support each other.

Apunipima's Social Worker Diana Jans was part of the initial Think Tank group that started with six indigenous women from across Australia at the beginning of the year. This was the third meeting of the group with up to 100 Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women from across the country. The women who attended lead the implementation of the project in their own communities.

Daphne De Jersey, Apunipima's Maternal and Child Health Worker in Mapoon was also involved and set up a support group in collaboration with other community women that initially met around three times a week.

With the ultimate aim of the community support groups to meet regularly and offer participants a safe place to share and discuss their aspirations and goals, build self-esteem and support life changing choices the monthly meetings in Mapoon continue to do that.

Participants are provided opportunities to build their relationship and positive parenting skills, build confidence and leadership capability and explore practical ways to build better lives for their children and families.

"Supporting women is all about empowering women in their communities to be leaders and be the impact of change in order to build better lives for themselves, their children and their families" Ms Jans said.

"This is an exciting opportunity for people to help lead and deliver change to women in the Cape and be part of giving them a support network to feel safe in."



## LOCKHART RIVER

### New equipment for new life in the Cape

Expectant mums in Lockhart River received a boost this year as Apunipima took delivery of its latest ultrasound machine.

Although Apunipima has trained its midwives in the use of ultrasound machines, due to their cost, only a few communities have been able to benefit. Now, after receiving \$32,450 from the Queensland Governments Gambling Community Benefit Fund, expectant mums in Lockhart River are able to access Midwifery-led ultrasounds in their community.

Diagnostic tests like nuchal screening and 20-week morphology scans will still need to be done in Cairns, however, Apunipima midwives are trained to be able to determine accurate gestational age earlier, detect multiple pregnancies and check the position of the baby, when needed.

Head of Apunipima's Family Health Team, Rachel Sargeant said, "This piece of equipment will make a real difference to families in the Cape expecting a new addition."

"Providing a midwifery led, ultrasound scanning service in remote Indigenous communities of Cape York, means access to important, timely information which eases accurate logistical planning and provides an improved, consistent and more comprehensive antenatal care service. Consequently this increases best health outcomes for mum and bub, without always having to travel long distances away from family and community."

"What's most exciting is that mums, dads and family members will get to see their little one as it grows in utero, promoting attachment and family bonding, whilst staying home in remote area settings."



## NAPRANUM

### Children in Napranum take great LEAPS toward a healthy life with Apunipima

Good nutrition and physical activity early in a child's life are essential for learning, healthy growth and development.

This year saw Apunipima's Community Nutrition team deliver LEAPS (Learning, Eating, Active, Play, Sleep), a professional development program, to early childhood educators and care services in Napranum.

The training provides up to date information about nutrition and physical activity for children aged from 0-5 years and is an opportunity for educators to come together to

share ideas around some of the ways good nutrition and physical activity can be supported in early childhood settings/services.

Apunipima worked in partnership with NAQ Nutrition to make sure the program could reach the remote communities of Cape York.

Community Nutritionist Kirby Murtha said the program is an invaluable opportunity for staff working in remote early childhood education and care services to improve their service through better understanding of the roles of good nutrition and active play.

Educators can then share this information with families.

LEAPS is a collaborative project between Queensland University of Technology (lead agency), NAQ Nutrition and the Queensland Branch of the Australian Council for Health, Physical Activity and Recreation and is funded by the Queensland Government.

LEAPS is based on the Australian Government resource, Get Up and Grow, and aligns with the National Quality Standard and Early Years Learning Framework.





# Cooking for generational change

Community-driven collaboration has secured healthy cooking skills for life in the Aboriginal community of Mossman Gorge.

Jamie's Ministry of Food Mobile Kitchen has just wrapped up its final week of classes after being stationed in Mossman Gorge. The program offers practical hands-on cooking classes and shares tips and tricks for preparing meals from scratch with fresh affordable ingredients.

With support from Apunipima Cape York Health Council and Mossman Gorge's governing body, Bamanga Bubu Ngadimunku Aboriginal Corporation (BBNAC), Jamie's Ministry of Food Mobile Kitchen was able to make Mossman Gorge its second Aboriginal community to visit. Jamie's Ministry of Food Mobile Kitchen is delivered by the Good Foundation and is supported by funding from the Queensland Government, Department of Health.

BBNAC chair Karen Gibson said the green light to have the kitchen in the community was a collaborative effort from BBNAC, Apunipima Cape York Health Council, Mossman Gorge community, and service providers Royal Flying Doctor Service Wellbeing Centre and Cape York Partnerships Opportunity Hub. Community stakeholders worked together to organise site logistics, use of amenities, program promotion and class bookings.

The program aims to inspire people to get back to basics in the kitchen and share ideas to assist families to prepare meals at home rather than opt for takeaway foods and in turn, help to reduce the rate of diet related chronic disease.

"This is an opportunity to learn about good food and transform it to another level," Ms Gibson said. "It's about our people being open to adopt new ideas and learn



about food in the kitchen that will ultimately contribute positively to our people's health.

Ms Gibson said having Jamie's Ministry of Food visiting Mossman Gorge for five weeks was very exciting for the traditional Bama people.

Health Action Team chair and community resident Donna Henning said Jamie's Ministry of Food is an inspiration for the 130 people living in Mossman Gorge.

"It's very empowering to have this big kitchen on our doorstep," Ms Henning said. It's a real opportunity to learn more healthy skills."

BBNAC vice chair Roy Gibson, who facilitates the Ngadiku Dreamtime Walks in the community, said without collaboration from the community and other organisations, its people would have missed out on this opportunity.

"This is the best thing that could happen to our community right now," Mr Gibson said. "It's just magic to see our people involved in a project to this scale.

"Our people are able to understand more about the importance of eating healthy food and that cooking good food gives kids a better start to their day. This is something that the kids can pass on for generations."

Apunipima's Mossman Gorge Primary Health Care Centre manager Sharyll Ellington said this was another step to help Close the Gap. "Our health workers are always educating our people on eating healthily, ensuring they have enough physical activity in their day and are having their regular health check," she said.

"To have Jamie's Ministry of Food in the community complements everything we aim to do as a community-controlled health organisation and this is empowering

for not only us in the health industry but for our traditional people."

Apunipima's Community Nutritionist, Kirby Murtha said, "Collaboration between partners has been key to making this a success. As a result of Queensland Government funding and the commitment made by the Minister for Health Cameron Dick, to increase Jamie's Ministry of Food program reach into Aboriginal communities we have been able to make this happen.

"The local partnership between Apunipima, BBNAC, the Royal Flying Doctor Service and Cape York Partnerships has also been critical in ensuring strong community engagement and of course sorting the logistics on the ground. We are delighted with the response and look forward to working with our partners on future programs."





## PORMPURA AW

### Education the key to help halt diabetes in Pormpuraaw

In the lead up to World Health Day in Pormpuraaw this year, the focus was on diabetes. Apunipima's Healthy Lifestyles and Diabetes teams, along with Pormpur Paanthu held a Women's Group Gathering in Pormpuraaw to educate women on how they can be part of prevention and management of diabetes.

Highlighting the importance of nutrition and being active triggered discussions on how diabetes is an international problem, and how the incidence of young people being diagnosed with type 2 diabetes is increasing.

With type 2 diabetes prevalent in the Cape, Apunipima is helping to educate



both young people and adults about chronic disease through yarning sessions.

Type 2 diabetes accounts for about 90 per cent of all diabetes worldwide. The global rise of childhood obesity and physical inactivity plays a crucial role in a person developing diabetes.

Apunipima's Diabetes Nurse Educator Cath Dowey said the Women's Health and Wellbeing Awareness evening focused on social wellbeing activities with the key message about diabetes.

"We had women prepare a delicious healthy spaghetti Bolognese for supper and they enjoyed some relaxing well-

being activities including face, hair and nail pampering interspersed with mini health checks enabling us to test Blood Pressure and Blood Glucose Levels," Ms Dowey said.

"We yarned about healthy lifestyle choices including how as mothers, aunties, sisters and grandmothers, we can encourage children to have water instead of sugary drinks and for lunch offer sandwiches, fruit and vegetable plates rather than fast food options. We even came up with a range of fun lunchbox ideas including one mum who makes ice blocks from coconut water and drops in a small piece of fruit, her little girl loves these as a treat."

## WUJAL WUJAL

### Children, culture and nutrition celebrated



Wujal Wujal Kindergarten kids celebrated National Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children's Day with a visit from Apunipima's Healthy Lifestyle team.

Held on August 4, the national day is designed to help kids recognise their strength and culture. The theme, Little People, Big Futures, is about kids standing tall and feeling connected to and proud of their culture.

Apunipima's Healthy Lifestyle team including a dietitian, diabetes educator and podiatrist visited Wujal Wujal Kindergarten and delivered education sessions to children, parents and childcare workers on the importance of healthy eating and physical activity.

Children had the chance to make their own fruit snacks and enjoy a treasure hunt to find fruits and vegetables as well as have health workers read a story book about how eating healthily makes you strong.

Nutrition Team Leader Melinda Hammond said educating children on healthy eating choices from a young age provides children with a good start life. "We want to support the best start for children in Cape York," Ms Hammond said.

"By giving children and their parents/carers the tools to make healthy eating and lifestyle choices, we are helping to embed skills that can be carried throughout life.

# PARTNERSHIPS

## Bopping to the beat of Apunipima's Baby One Program™

Mums, bubs and families in Cape York will benefit with a helping hand from Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies in Australia as they partner with Apunipima to deliver everyday health and personal care products for both mum and bub.

Apunipima's award-winning Baby One Program™ is delivered by Apunipima's Maternal and Child Health team. An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Worker-led program, it looks after mums-to-be from pre-pregnancy to 1000 days.

During key stages of pregnancy, mums-to-be are given Baby Baskets that are equipped with essential baby goods, including baby wipes, bath towels and nursing pads – all of which help mum and bub off to a great start.

Apunipima Family Health Manager Rachel Sargeant said the partnership was all about supporting Cape York families.

"We are very excited to be working with the Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies in Australia and grateful for their generous donation of baby goods," Ms Sargeant said.

"These goods mean a lot to our families who live in community. Our comprehensive Baby One Program™ and Home Visiting Program ensures mums-to-be, their bubs and families are well supported, educated, empowered and looked after and that is important."

The donation from the Johnson & Johnson Family of Companies comes as the first milestone in a newly formed partnership with Apunipima which, over time, will see the organisations working together to help meet the needs of families in the Baby One Program™.







# OUR PEOPLE

**Over the past year our workforce has remained stable with 157 employees (headcount), reflecting the confidence of our funders in our ability to deliver primary health care services in Cape York. We have a turnover rate of 14.27% which is well below health industry benchmarks which trend significantly higher than this, particularly in rural and remote settings.**

**O**ur Workforce profile continues to exceed key Australian benchmarks. With 52.7% of our workforce identifying as Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander compared with 1.6% of the national health workforce, it reflects Apunipima's reputation amongst other community controlled health organisations, as employed of choice for Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islanders. We are proud to boast Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander representation across all occupational groups, organisational functions and at all levels within the

organisation. The age distribution of our workforce sees 65% of our staff aged 49 or younger which strongly supports our ability to achieve a sustainable and stable workforce and a return on training investments. Apunipima has continued to strengthen relationships and our reputation with clinical bodies and vocational training sector. Over the last year we have maintained clinical

trainee placements with approved registrar training runs and registrar placements and supported further health worker qualification and registration. Our commitment to capacity building under our strategic plan is reflected in the fact that at the end of June, 21.74% of staff were undertaking further/study qualification.

## **EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (EAP)**

Assure Programs has been EAP provider for Apunipima since November 2013. The annualised utilisation rate is tracking at 5.73%, compared to the contract rate of 9%. Actual access over the 12 month period is 11 clients.





## NATIONAL FIRST ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER HEALTH WORKER KIDNEY EDUCATION MODULE



In a national first, a kidney health education module has been developed specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers who are on the front line of looking after people with renal conditions.

Developed by Kidney Health Australia with support from Apunipima's Generalist Nurse (Renal) Rochelle Pitt, the module takes Health Workers through the symptoms and signs of kidney disease as well as the testing and referral processes.

'There has never been an kidney education module specifically for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers who are on the front line of looking after Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who bear the greatest burden of chronic kidney disease,' Ms Pitt said.

'There is a real lack of awareness of kidney disease in the community as there are often no symptoms until it is at an advanced stage. Our job is to make sure Health Workers are making sure everyone who should be tested is tested. We have an epidemic of Type 2 Diabetes on Cape York and kidney failure is a common complication of diabetes. Infections associated with scabies is another cause, as is rheumatic fever. We call on everyone to test, test, test – catch things early and they are much easier to cope with.'

Kidney Health Australia's Debbie Fortnum - National General Manager Education said, 'We know that 70% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders who start dialysis, do so as a result of having diabetes.'

'We plan to deliver this education module to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Health Workers all over Australia. Supporting those workers to get the message out locally can make a difference. We are thankful for the support of Apunipima and Rochelle Pitt to help make this project reality.'

*“There is a real lack of awareness of kidney disease in the community as there are often no symptoms until it is at an advanced stage. Our job is to make sure Health Workers are making sure everyone who should be tested is tested”*



## HAT TRICK OF AWARDS FOR DOCTOR TRAINING PROGRAM

At the Tropical Medical Training's annual GP Supervisor Conference, Apunipima came away with a haul as they took out three of the four award categories.

Apunipima won Best Registrar (Dr Jake Parker), Best Cultural Training Post (Sharyll Ellington for Mossman Gorge), and Best Training Post (Apunipima Paediatric Specialist Outreach) but sadly missed out on the Best Supervisor award.

Tropical Medical Training runs training programs for General Practice and Apunipima has two registrars as well as several supervisors and mentors who are active participants in the program.

Senior Medical Officer Dr Jacki Mein said it is an honour to take home the awards and for Apunipima's doctors to be recognised for the valuable work they do in Cape York.

"This recognises the hard work of all of our registrars, and supervisors training the next generation of Cape doctors," Dr Mein said.

The applicants are vetted by an independent panel of experts and applications came from across northern Queensland, from Proserpine to Thursday Island.

The CEO Jillian Kennedy, personally congratulated Apunipima representatives present at the event, on an outstanding achievement in achieving these awards.



## NOEL'S KEEPING AN EYE ON HIS VISION FOR THE CAPE

Noel Rofe has a vision for all people to have the best eye health care in remote Cape York.



Mr Rofe is Apunipima Cape York Health Council's new eye health coordinator and will coordinate the eye health program from Yarrabah to Mapoon.

With 13 years of experience in the health industry and more than a decade of that time specialising in eye health, Mr Rofe is passionate about eyes.

"You need to look after your eyes because you can't go and buy another pair from the shop," Mr Rofe said. "People can look after their eyes by getting regular eye check-ups and protect them by wearing sunglasses when they are outside."

Refractive error would be the most common issue with people's eyes and are usually corrected by wearing glasses (Myopia – near sightedness and Hyperopia – far sightedness

are just two of many). Pterygiums, a slow growth which grows toward the centre of the eye, and cataracts are other issues/problems that people present with in the community.

Most eye treatment can be conducted in the patient's community, eye surgeries can be done in Weipa where necessary so people do not need to leave the Cape. Mr Rofe will be instrumental in coordinating eye clinics and mentoring to hone home the message that prevention of eye health is the key for good eyesight.

He said about 1 in 5 people between the ages of 25 year olds to 40 year olds and above have some sort of eye health issue in Cape York. Mr Rofe travels to 13 communities with an optometrist and ophthalmologist as part of a wider team to carry out eye health screenings.

"Eye health technology can allow us to intervene before such things like diabetes, cataracts and other associated eye problems cause blindness," he said. "Instead of watching the world go by, someone's life can be changed through good eye care and healthy lifestyle habits."

"Good eye health is important and that's why we actively visit communities and ensure everyone whom sees our eye team is looking after their health as best they can because eye health is part of the wider picture when it comes to chronic disease."

All forms of diabetic eye disease have the potential to cause severe vision loss and blindness.

Early detection, timely treatment, and appropriate follow-up care of diabetic eye disease can protect

*“You need to look after your eyes because you can't go and buy another pair from the shop”*





## APUNIPIMA TEAM MEMBER IN NATIONAL BREAST SCREEN CAMPAIGN

Apunipima Health Promotion Officer Fiona Millard will appear in a national breast screening promotional campaign which will be aired on the internet later this year.

The campaign, funded by the Australian Government and produced by Brisbane-based Indigenous creative agency Gilimbbaa, aims to increase the participation rate of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women in the breast screening programs.

In 2013 the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare noted that only 36% of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women participated in breast screening programs compared to 54% of non - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women.

While fewer Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women develop breast cancer than non - Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women, they are more likely to receive a late diagnosis,

experience complications and die as a result of the disease.

Apunipima Cape York Health Council supports breast screening and urges all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women to talk to their doctor, nurse or health worker about the screening program or call BreastScreen Queensland on 13 20 50 for more information.

All women 40 years and over are eligible for a FREE breast screen every two years with BreastScreen Queensland. BreastScreen Queensland also runs a mobile service that visits rural and remote locations every two years.



Despite not being crowned HESTA's Nurse of the Year at the gala awards ceremony in Melbourne earlier this year Apunipima Cape York Health Council Maternal and Child Health Nurse/Midwife Lisa Smith was not disheartened.

"It was a great honour to be named a finalist for Nurse of the Year and I am so proud to be part of this experience," Ms Smith said. "It has been rewarding to be recognised as a finalist and I congratulate Nurse of the Year winner Angie Monk."

The award recognises the achievements of individual nurses in the delivery of outstanding patient care and supports the pursuit of excellence in nursing to ensure nursing care is effective, efficient and focused on patients and their individual health care needs. Ms Smith has been nursing for 28 years and said taking up the

career was one of the best decisions she had made.

Ms Smith began work at Apunipima in mid-2013, servicing the remote communities of Mapoon, Pormpuraaw and Kowanyama and has found the work both challenging and rewarding.

"The rewards of the job are the great relationships that we have with the families in the Cape. Nurses that work for Apunipima go to the same communities each week and they become a constant for community members. We become a trusted person among community people which is a great honour and privilege.

"To be able to be work independently as a nurse in Cape York requires lots of training and I am supported by the organisation to gain the qualifications and skills to perform an initial one-stop service."

## QUALITY AND RISK

Apunipima retains ISO 9001:2008 Standard certification to 25th July 2017, having undertaken the annual survey in May 2016 by IHCAC (Institute for Healthy Communities Australia). Included in the scope of this certification are Cairns, Coen, Mum's and Bub's Centre – Atharpuch, located in Kowanyama, Mossman Gorge, and Mapoon.

The scope of ISO 9001:2008 includes all Primary Health Care Services delivered by Apunipima to the Communities of Cape York.

The Mossman Gorge Primary Health Care Centre is accredited to the RACGP Standards until the 22nd Feb 2017.

Some areas of focus have been:

- Review of our health service delivery policy and procedure framework, which underpins AGPAL accreditation, to pave a structured way forward for policy review and implementation in expanded and enhanced services.
- Planning for the implementation of RACGP (AGPAL) Standards in expanded and enhance services.

Apunipima has been certified to RACGP and ISO Standards for 5 years.

The focus of this year has been planning and preparing support for Apunipima's expansion and enhancement of infrastructure and services in community, specifically Napranum and Aurukun.

## RISK

Enterprise and Operational Risks are recorded on the Risk Register.

The Board is accountable for oversight of the Enterprise Risks while the CEO is accountable for managing both Enterprise risks and Operational Risks.

Reports for the Board and CEO have been developed enabling risks to be reviewed on a quarterly basis.

At the request of the Board an external audit of the Risk Governance Framework was conducted in March 2016 by Pacifica Chartered Accountants confirming a mature system and well administered processes are in place. A small number of improvements were noted in the areas of risk governance and reporting enhancements which have been accepted by the Board for implementation.